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THE INDEPENDENT

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Loyalist leader salutes his old IRA enemy

Could Irish terrorists ever be reconciled? – Graveside oration gives hope

Alan Murdoch
Dublin

Mourners in a quiet Irish country churchyard yesterday heard a moving tribute from across the religious and political divide when a Loyalist leader gave the graveside oration at a former IRA leader's funeral.

It was a rare moment in politics, when differences that once drove adversaries to arms are set aside. Gusty Spence, the former UVF leader who once served a prison sentence for the murder of a Catholic barman, came unannounced to the edge of the grave of the former IRA border brigade chief Jim Lynch and spoke with quiet dignity of the loss of an enemy who had become a close friend.

Gusty Spence: Set old enmities aside

Many among the 150 mourners at St Michael's Church in Cootehill, County Cavan, were unaware of who the elderly speaker was until the poignant story of the friendship between the two men and their families was revealed by Mr Lynch's relatives. Mr Lynch died on Wednesday after a brief illness, aged 72.

Mr Spence told the mourners, "Jim Lynch and I were friends. I am not here to defy the man. He was a simple man, but although not wealthy he was wealthy in his friends and in his love of his country.

"The two of us were from different traditions," Mr Spence said. "I am here to represent the Unionist tradition, and to say that it meant a great deal to me to know him, and that I learned a lot from his friendship." He described the former IRA commander as "a kindred spirit".

"In a poignant farewell he quoted from Laurence Binyon's traditional lament "For the Fallen," more often recited in memory of British comrades at arms: "Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn./ At the going down of the sun and in the morning/We will remember them. They shall not wither that grow old with me.

A family friend said later : "People were very moved by that and asked "Who was that?"

Mr Lynch was officer in command of the Cavan-Monaghan brigade of the IRA during the border campaign in the late 1950s. Dropping out of republican activity, he became a salesman with the Dublin cake firm Gateaux.

In the Seventies Mr Lynch had become involved in cross-border initiatives that saw Protestant children from the most deprived parts of Shankill Road area of Belfast spend summer holidays at camps in the Irish Republic in the company of Catholic children at Lynch's home village of Cootehill.

The two men met through a common acquaintance, Ireland's late Roman Catholic Primate, Cardinal Tomas O'Fiaich, who had met Spence in prison at a time when the UVF man was losing faith in violence as a means of achieving political ends.

This unlikely dialogue led to a celebrated present from the Loyalist of a prison delicacy, tobacco soaked in poteen, to the fellow pipe-smoking cleric. Spence told the Cardinal gleefully it was made illicitly in a secret still by the Loyalist inmates in the Maze Prison and drunk with permission from commanders on special occasions.

Spence's ensuing dialogue with O'Fiaich, a former university lecturer in history and a regular visitor to H-Block prisoners led to the UVF man becoming aware of Lynch and his parallel abandonment of violence in favour of efforts to bridge the community divide. O'Fiaich supported Lynch's summer camps project.

Mr Lynch's Yorkshire-born wife Norma told *The Independent* her husband and Spence wrote to each other some years ago, then spoke on the telephone. "Then we went to meet them [Mr and Mrs Spence]. Both men shared a strong interest in Irish history. Everything was history, history, history."

Years before the 1994 ceasefires Cardinal O'Fiaich "told Jim that if there was ever to be hope of peace in Ireland Gusty Spence was the man who would do a lot to make it happen," she recalled.

Norma Lynch said her husband "believed, as Wolfe Tone (the Protestant founder of Irish Republicanism) argued, in replacing the name of Protestant, Catholic and dissenter with the common name of Irishmen. It was my husband's dream that people would get together."

Gascoigne: His inclusion in England squad after admitting wife beating has raised a storm Photograph: Jasper Juinen/Reuter

England expects... a wife-beater to stay in decent obscurity

Liz Hunt

He had a clean shot at an open goal but Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, failed spectacularly, according to thousands of the more discerning fans of the beautiful game.

His inclusion of Paul Gascoigne, alleged wife-beater and champion "oik", in the England squad for its World Cup qualifying match next week has unleashed widespread outrage.

Almost two-thirds of callers in a Radio Five Live poll yesterday said Hoddle was wrong to include Gascoigne. In a poll of more than 1,000 people for Teletext, 71 per cent said Hoddle should not have picked the footballer, whose wife Sheryl was pictured last month heavily bruised with her arm in a sling after a reported contretemps with her drunken spouse in a Scottish hotel.

Angry women's groups attacked Hoddle for putting football before the safety of women, and accused him of condoning domestic violence. "Winning a match is obviously more important..." Julie Bindel of the International Conference on Violence and the Abuse of Women said.

With the nation reported to be in moral free-fall and its schools apparently over-run by violent pupils, Hoddle, a celebrity Christian, had the chance this week to make a difference, his critics argue.

Excluding Gazza from the national squad would have signalled public rejection of the worst excesses of the troubled star's behaviour, professionally and personally, in recent weeks. "Forget moral guidance and contracts for good behaviour, not picking Gazza for England would have had a bigger impact," said one disillusioned teacher of teenage boys.

This is an England team, after all, which is still riding high on the euphoria of its famous defeat by Germany in the European Championship in June. Then the valiant and unflagging efforts of the players – especially Gazza – won the hearts and minds of everyone. Even Germaine Greer was moved to eulogise the team, describing Paul Gascoigne as the lovable "Just William" of the side.

But instead of grasping the opportunity presented to him, Hoddle yesterday was accused of endorsing Yob Culture and canonising Gazza, as its patron saint. This peroxide-enhanced, cerebrally challenged role model joins a recovering alcoholic (Tony Adams) and a reformed drug addict and gambler (Paul Merson) in the squad, elegible to represent their country against Georgia next week.

Sport, page 32

Fear of outright war after Tutsi offensive in Zaire

James Roberts

Zaire and Rwanda were heading yesterday for a conflict that could engulf central Africa, as the Rwandan army and its local allies took control of large parts of eastern Zaire. The Tutsi allies control the major towns of Bukavu and Uvira, and are on the point of taking Goma.

As hundreds of thousands of refugees in the eastern provinces of North and South Kivu fled before the fighting, the ethnic battles threatened to explode in the capital, Kinshasa. Thousands of university students swarmed through the streets demanding all-out war with neighbouring Rwanda and Burundi and shouting for the Tutsi rebels' defeat. Many traveled in vehicles hijacked from civilians. Tutsis, who are among some of Zaire's most successful entrepeneurs and professionals, are packing up and leaving, fearing a witchhunt. On Thursday, the transitional parliament called for Tutsis to be sacked from the army, civil service and state-run firms.

Panicking residents streamed out of the border town of Goma as Zairean and Rwandan soldiers fought in the streets and Tutsi rebels battled for control of the airport, the aid lifeline for hundreds of thousands of refugees. "There are RPA (Rwandan Patriotic Army) troops in uniforms in the centre of Goma city, the main square. They came in by land and across Lake Kivu on boats landing on the city beach," said a diplomat in Rwanda, who declined to be identified. "We are *110 per cent certain the RPA is* in Goma. It is confirmed," added another diplomat.

Radio reports said 100 foreigners were trapped in a cathedral in the centre of Bukavu, a provincial capital 60 miles south of Goma at the southern end of Lake Kivu. And 35 miles (55 kilometers) north of Goma, 200,000 terrified Hutu refugees were fleeing the fighting.

Tutsis, backed by the Rwandan army, are fighting to repel Zairean army attacks and to push Rwandan Hutu refugees further into Zaire. A Reuters photographer, Corinne Dufka, confirmed yesterday that Bukavu fell to the rebels on Wednesday. Dufka, who was in the town throughout the fighting, said the Zairean military and allied militiamen fled the city followed by tens of thousands of people in the hours before the rebels entered the town. She said the ethnic Tutsi Banyamulenge rebels, who were well equipped with mortars, were well disciplined and had not looted the town. She saw 28 people who had been executed by the Zairean army before the troops fled. After capturing Bukavu the rebels then closed in on Goma.

Heavy cross-border artillery and mortar fire continued yesterday. A shell fired from Zaire exploded in the main market of Gisenyi, Rwanda, right across the border from Goma, and wounded several people. The artillery attack sent about 5,000 residents fleeing.

About 10,000 to 15,000 Rwandan troops were attacking from inside Zaire and from the Rwandan side of the border, said a Zairean military spokesman, Victor Masandi.

Tutsis moved into the area of Zaire north of Lake Kivu about 60 years ago, and have lived in Zairean territory south of the lake for at least 200 years. Last month Zairean officials ordered those in South Kivu, the Banyamulenge, to leave.

On Thursday, Raymond Chretien, the new UN envoy to Central Africa, said in New York that he would stop in Lausanne to see the Zairean President, Mobutu Sese Seko, before he leaves for the region in the coming week. Mr Mobutu, 66, underwent surgery for prostate cancer in Lausanne's University Hospital in August.

The fighting is fueling a refugee crisis that threatens to match the proportions of the 1994 exodus of 1.1 million Rwandan Hutus, who fled to Zaire fearing reprisals for the Hutu massacre of Tutsis.

QUICKLY

Nurse jailed

A nurse who deliberately altered crucial settings on life-saving machines in an intensive care ward was yesterday jailed for five years. Page 6

No easy solution

The new headmaster of the troubled Ridings School, in Halifax, admitted that there would be no easy way for him to restore order and turn the school around. Page 4

Tax cuts warning

Five of the Government's six independent economic advisers attempted to persuade the Chancellor not to indulge in a pre-election Budget tax giveaway. The City, however, believes that he is going to give away £2-3bn. Page 22

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news

Tough curbs on unions planned

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

The Government is proposing some of the toughest employment legislation since the Second World War, making it difficult or impossible for unions to mount effective industrial action in a wide range of industries.

In a draft Green Paper leaked to the TUC, ministers reveal plans to give companies and individuals rights to prevent "disproportionate or excessive" stoppages particularly in monopoly services.

The document, entitled *Industrial Action and Trade Unions*, goes much further than unions feared – doubling the notice period for stoppages from seven to 14 days and enforcing fresh ballots every three months where action continues.

Under the proposals, ballots will also require a majority of those entitled to vote, not simply a majority of those voting. That would mean the present mandate for action at the Royal Mail would be null and void.

Other suggestions by the Government were labelled as "vindictive and small minded" by TUC officials. Rights to time off for union activities would be abolished, and there would no longer be an obligation on management to provide information on which to base collective bargaining.

By far the most serious element of the proposed law is the plan to outlaw "disproportionate" action. The paper makes clear that recent strikes affecting the fire service, public transport and the postal service would have come within the scope of such laws. Unions which fell foul of injunctions could expect fines for contempt of court and sequestration of assets.

John Monks, general secretary of the TUC, said ministers were "plumbing new depths" in an attempt to make political capital out of trade unions. He said the provisions were confusing and could lead to thousands of court cases where judges would have to decide whether the impact of industrial action would be "disproportionate or excessive".

The paper suggests that industrial action would qualify if there were risks to life, health or safety; threats to national security or serious damage to property or the economy. Another provision which might be seen as a "catch-all" is where action disrupts "everyday life or activities in the whole or part of the country".

It acknowledges that there may be some "uncertainty" over the legislation initially, but this would reduce as case law built up.

The paper makes clear that the strikes on London Underground this summer would have been declared unlawful unless the union maintained minimum services on all lines. The law could not be invoked where individuals had been "mildly inconvenienced".

Another example used by the document, however, is where a mobile phone network is closed by industrial action. Because it would be expensive to switch to another system, the document implies that a customer could legitimately seek redress. An official has added in parenthesis in this part of the draft: "We are looking for a better example".

While only a minority of trade unions had abused their power, the Government did not believe that relying on unions to "exercise restraint" provided sufficient protection, the paper says.

A spokeswoman for the Department of Trade and Industry said Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, would not comment on any leaked document. Mr Lang had however set out his views on why strikes with a "disproportionate effect" should be made unlawful.

Against the grain: Anne Watson, who is trying to get tobacco tax cut, brings her nationwide campaign to Parliament. Photograph: Andrew Buurman

Ministers do U-turn on sex tourism Bill

Jason Bennetto and Colin Brown

The Government appeared to be in further disarray over its legislative programme last night when it announced that yet another measure - this time sex tourism - would be included in a Bill just days after ministers said it would be left for back bench MPs to adopt.

Labour immediately seized upon the announcement as the latest example of a Tory u-turn.

Under the proposals child molesters who commit offences abroad, particularly in the Far East, could be prosecuted in this country.

The move will be included in legislation to introduce a register of paedophiles.

The Government decided to extend extra-territorial jurisdiction to child sex offences in July after a six-month review of the law.

New powers would also cover offences committed in Britain, including conspiring to commit or inciting child sex abuse abroad.

Last week Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, said that the sex tourism measures should be included in a Private Members Bill, rather than the Crime Bill, which is expected to make slow progress through the house due to its wide scope and controversial provisions.

But a Home Office spokesman confirmed yesterday that provisions for the new powers will now be included in a new Bill - left out of the Queen's Speech but reinstated to the Government's legislative agenda after Labour leader Tony Blair promised co-operation.

The Bill will create a national register of the whereabouts of convicted sex offenders.

The announcement is latest in a series of Governmental changes of heart.

The Prime Minister, having initially aruged that legislation on stalking was difficult and should be introduced via a Private Members Bill, agreed mid speech to make it part of official government legislation after a promise by Labour to help speed it through.

He did the same after securing a similar oppostion agreement on the proposal for the register of sex offenders.

There have also been swift changes in the government's stance on combat knives, which the Home Office first dismissed as an unsolvable problem before announcing a review.

significant shorts

Man charged over Lisburn Army bomb

A man is to be charged with bombing Army headquarters in Northern Ireland, it was revealed last night. He comes from north Belfast and is expected to appear in court in the city today.

One soldier died following the no-warning IRA double bomb attack at Thiepval barracks, Lisburn, Co Antrim, on 7 October. More than 30 others, many of them civilians, were injured when two car bombs went off within minutes of each other after being driven through the "pass-holders only" entrance at the barracks.

Irish Gardai yesterday seized grenades and bomb-making equipment on a remote farm in Co Louth near the border with Northern Ireland. The find – the second important find this week – was made close to where IRA mortars of the Mark 6 type used in the 1994 Heathrow Airport attack were discovered last month.

Sun apologises to Christie

Former Olympic champion sprint Linford Christie yesterday accepted substantial undisclosed libel damages over a newspaper's claim that he had failed to pay maintenance for his children.

The *Sun* ran a front-page story in August last year claiming that the 10-year-old twins and 16-year-old son were forced to live on state benefits, and published criticism of the athlete generated by the story. News Group Newspapers Ltd apologised for the publication and accepted that Mr Christie had made – and continued to make – substantial payments for the children.

Police learn to save lives

City of London Police are being trained to save lives with automated external defibrillators (AEDs), used for people suffering heart attacks. The three-year scheme was launched yesterday by Bart's City Life Saver, a charity based at St Bartholomew's Hospital. Officers will operate a smaller version of hospital AEDs to analyse the patient's heart and administer the appropriate electrical charge.
Susan Emmett

Van in fatal motorway crash

A 19-year-old woman died yesterday when a van carrying 15 young people to a theme park collided with the central reservation on a motorway. Two other women were in a critical condition in hospital after the accident, which happened on the M42 near Solihull, West Midlands. Nine others of the group travelling in the Ford Transit van were treated in hospital.

A police spokesperson said the E-registration van, which had benches down both sides, had apparently lost control near Junction 6 of the northbound carriageway.

New regulations come into force next February which require all minibuses carrying children to have forward-facing seats and a seatbelt on every seat.

Oasis star in £2m deal

Noel Gallagher, the force behind supergroup Oasis, has signed a £2m publishing deal to write songs for another two albums. The contract extends his commitment with Sony, Creation Songs and Michael Jackson's ATV Music Publishing for another three years.

The top-selling group were on the point of splitting up in September after Noel's brother, Liam, walked out on their American tour. Now they are recording their third album in London.

Fiennes stuck in Chile

Sir Ranulph Fiennes' quest to become the first person to trek across the Antarctic has been delayed because of bad weather. The explorer was due to set off on a solo journey across 1,800 miles of frozen wilderness - but was stranded in Chile.

The Independent

Today's newspaper, including the Long Weekend, Magazine and the Eye, is a larger package than we have offered our readers before. As a result, and because of increased production costs, we have reluctantly raised the Saturday price by a modest 10p, from 50p to 60p. The price of *The Independent* on other days remains unaffected.

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From dirty dogs to ghetto-blasters – the culture of shame is back

Christian Wolmar and Luke Jarvis

The most famous Thatcherite borough in Britain has devised the modern equivalent of being put in the stocks. Anti-social tenants in Wandsworth who are convicted of offences such as allowing their dogs to foul footpaths are to have their names prominently displayed in council literature and advertisements in local newspapers.

The council's housing committee voted on Thursday night to publicise the names of 30 people found to be "dog-foulers" or to have disobeyed noise control orders but this list was reduced to 20 yesterday when the Tory chairwoman, Margaret Mervis, removed some of the names because they had an involvement with social services or the offences had occurred too long ago. She said that tenants in rent arrears would not be included: "I do not consider that being in rent arrears is anti-social."

However, local newspapers are not playing ball with Wandsworth's "name and shame" policy. The editor of the *Wandsworth Borough News* is insisting that any such publicity will have to be as part of paid advertisements.

The shaming by naming is part of a British tradition of civic humiliation stretching from the use of the stocks in the Middle Ages to more recent attempts by councils to name those in rent arrears or who had not paid their poll tax. DC Thomson, owner of the publications group, used to patrol the streets of Dundee in his Rolls-Royce at a sensible speed of 30mph and publish the registration numbers of any car that overtook him. And in July, Mark Smith, publican of the Crown, Ludgershall, in Wiltshire, showed continuously on a large screen a video of the thief convicted of taking his fruit machine takings.

The policy already got into trouble yesterday when one of those named, Mick O'Reilly, said he was planning legal action. "My little mongrel got out the back in January of this year. I left the gate open," said Mr O'Reilly, 54, who lives on the Somerset Estate. He was fined £72 and says he has never been in trouble before: "I'm going to sue for libel over this."

Wandsworth has always taken pride in being in the vanguard of Tory policy. In the late 1970s, it pioneered the sale of council houses, before the arrival of Margaret Thatcher in Downing Street, and it was the first council to contract out services such as dustbin collection and street cleaning.

Accusations of social engineering are borne out by the fact that the policies, particularly council house sales, have resulted in a complete transformation of the demography of the area. Battersea, once a Labour stronghold, is now a relatively safe Tory seat while David Mellor's Putney, a famous marginal in the 1970s, is now rock solid.

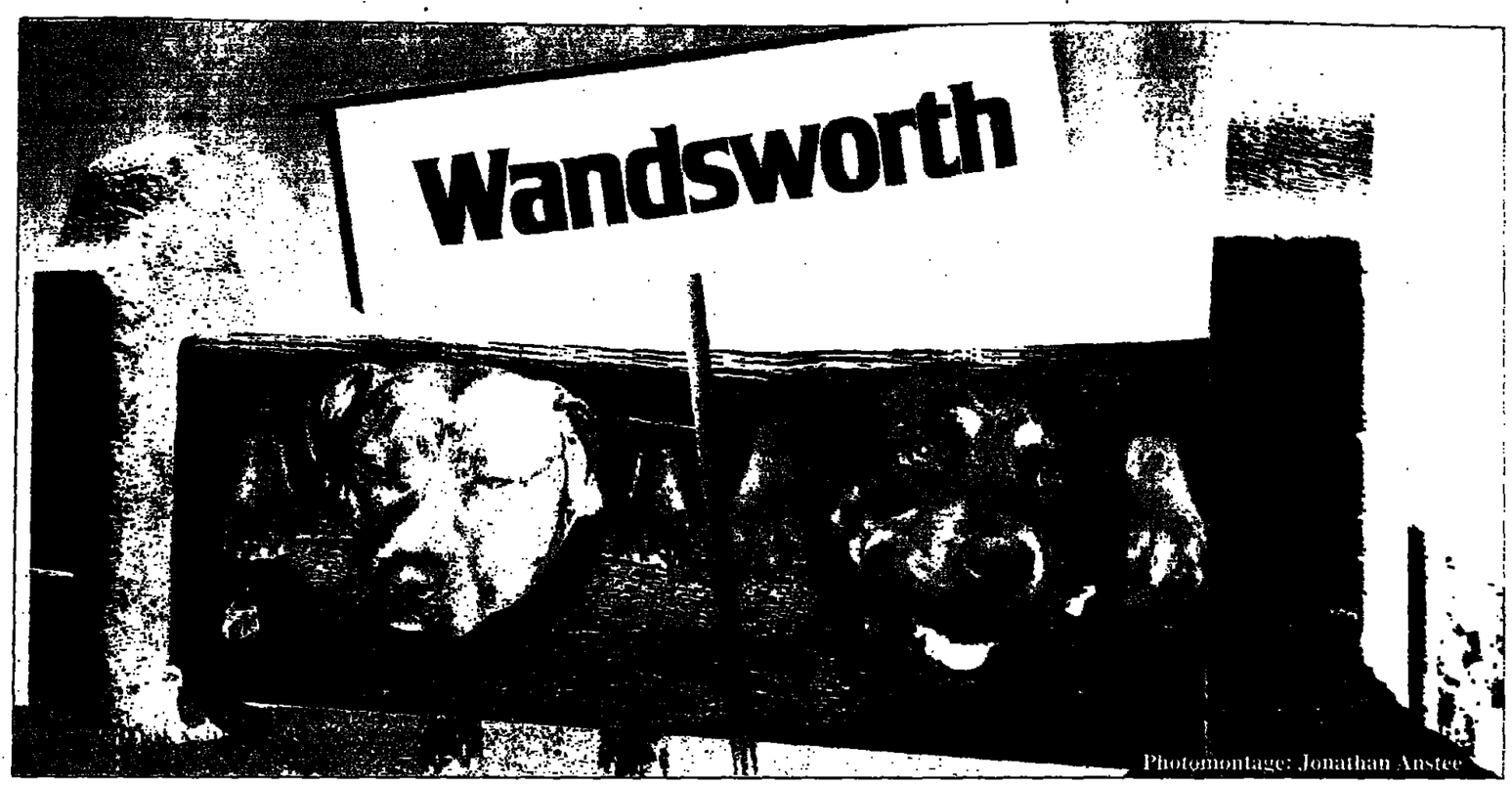
While for many years, the Labour opposition opposed every move by the council, in these days of blurred politics, the Labour group on the council is supporting much of new "name and shame" strategy.

John Gallagher, Labour's housing spokesman, said that he was worried "we would be called soft on law and order if we didn't go along with this". However, Labour did oppose the naming of people accused of criminal offences – rather than being the subject of council prosecutions– and this has now been postponed until a full council meeting next month because Labour said council tenants had not been consulted on the matter.

Long after the departure of Mrs Thatcher, the ethos still lives on in Wandsworth. Ms Mervis said that the council would soon be implementing a policy, made lawful under the Housing Act 1996, of evicting any tenants convicted of serious criminal offences. The strategy is part of a wider social agenda, also now being adopted by Labour front-benchers, of using the council's position as landlord to ensure that tenants behave themselves.

Opponents see it as patronising and discriminatory against tenants. Indeed, while the council prosecutes both local home owners and its own tenants for such offences, Ms Mervis said that only names of council tenants would be publicised: "We are doing this in our capacity of landlords as part of our strategy to deal with anti-social behaviour."

There have been previous examples of councils trying to shame their resident. In 1991, Brent, in north west London, took out four page advertisements in local freesheets listing the names and addresses for those who had orders for non-payment of poll tax and business rates. John Walker, the council's spokesman, said last night: "It was very unpopular with those listed but it worked as the non-payment rate went from 38 per cent to 10 per cent."



Photomontage: Jonathan Anstee

... but in Glasgow they manage it with a smile

Paper weights: Papier mache sculptures set an example to litter louts

A "heavy-weight" Glasgow couple have been very kindly helping out Strathclyde Police's Spotlight initiative by picking up litter themselves as part of a campaign to highlight the problem and the public nuisance that it causes.

The police are so pleased with the help from Mr and Mrs Maclean and their dog, Scrap that the Chief Constable will meet them this morning personally to thank them for the litter they that have been carrying.

The two six-feet paper-mache figures and their dog will be on display beside two Spotlight on Litter advertisement trailers outside the Pitt Street entrance of Strathclyde Police force headquarters. Chief Constable John Orr will meet the family at 11am. The paper-mache figures were commissioned for the Art Store, Queen Street, Glasgow, and were lent to Strathclyde Police for the duration of the three-month Spotlight Initiative.

The figures were made by Mhairi Corr, a Glasgow-based artist, who set up her workshop after receiving a grant from the Scottish Arts Council.

The figures will go back to the Art Store as a window-display after helping out the Spotlight campaign.

Today Sergeant Kenny Rodger will accompany the Maclean family along Sauchiehall Street, distributing public-information leaflets on litter and vandalism and giving advice to the public about the spotlight initiative and litter.

Four decades on, Hamburg says it has had enough of the Beatles

David Lister
Arts News Editor

Hamburg has banned The Beatles. Belatedly, almost four decades after the German port took in the bunch of teenage wannabes and nurtured their raw talent in its red light area nightclubs, it has decided enough is enough.

Messrs McCartney, Harrison and Starr are said to be puzzled and secretly a little thrilled that in their mid fifties they are considered too shocking for any city, let alone one as earthy as Hamburg.

The surviving Beatles were informed yesterday that the Hamburg city council has vetoed the playing of tracks from the group's new Anthology 3 album or shots from the accompanying Anthology video in its shopping malls or any public places.

Love me do: But Hamburg is no longer so keen

The album is being played in shopping malls across Germany, in cities including Berlin, Nuremburg and Frankfurt.

But Hamburg, the Continental city most closely associated with the group, has ordered a shutdown of the Beatles sound. When EMI, the Beatles' record company, was informed of the decision, it thought it was a joke and carried on with the public relays of the music. Then in a scene reminiscent of the pomp and pomposity of the mayor and corporation of Hanover in The Pied Piper, the city council of Hamburg invoked the might of its ancient bye-laws.

The corporation informed EMI there was an old city regulation which "prohibited flickering light in public places." This meant that playing of the Beatles video must cease immediately. Though no light flickers from the album, public plays of that have also been banned.

The Beatles' spokesman Geoff Baker said last night: "Perhaps they were concerned there would be riots at the check out counters. It does seem bizarre that the group who put this city on the map for much of the world and who reminisce about Hamburg in their new video now find that video banned by Hamburg city council. It's amusing and a little shocking that The Beatles are not considered suitable for public display in the city that once paid them to perform twice nightly."

Rushdie delighted after Danes change mind on exclusion

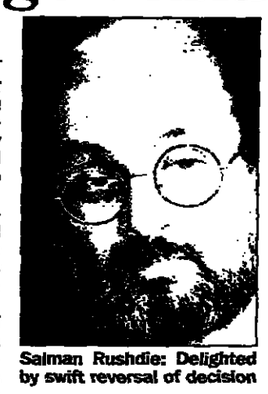
Tony Barber
Europe Editor

Salman Rushdie, the author living under an Iranian death threat, thanked the government of Denmark yesterday for reversing its decision and inviting him to Copenhagen to collect a literary award.

Earlier in the week, the Danish government had asked Rushdie to stay away from the award ceremony on the grounds that the police would not be able to provide for his security.

"I gather there's been a lot of fuss in Denmark today, and a lot of people have been very annoyed about the government's decision. I am delighted that they have so swiftly reversed their decision," Rushdie said.

The Danish culture minister, Jytte Hilten, said in a letter to the author that Denmark "regrets the award ceremony can-



Salman Rushdie: Delighted by swift reversal of decision

not take place as planned, but must assure you that the decision was taken purely on security grounds.

"I would like to invite you and personally present you with your prize in Copenhagen."

Denmark's Prime Minister, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, said Rushdie would have to scrap his plans to collect the award on 14 November, the date of the ceremony, but would be free to visit Copenhagen "some time before Christmas". He did not specify an exact date.

Rushdie has been living in semi-secrecy ever since the late Iranian spiritual revolutionary leader, the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, issued a *fatwa* in 1989 decreeing that he should be killed for his "blasphemous" book, *The Satanic Verses*. Iran's present rulers say that they are powerless to nullify the *fatwa*, but stress that they have no intention of sending hitmen to murder the author.

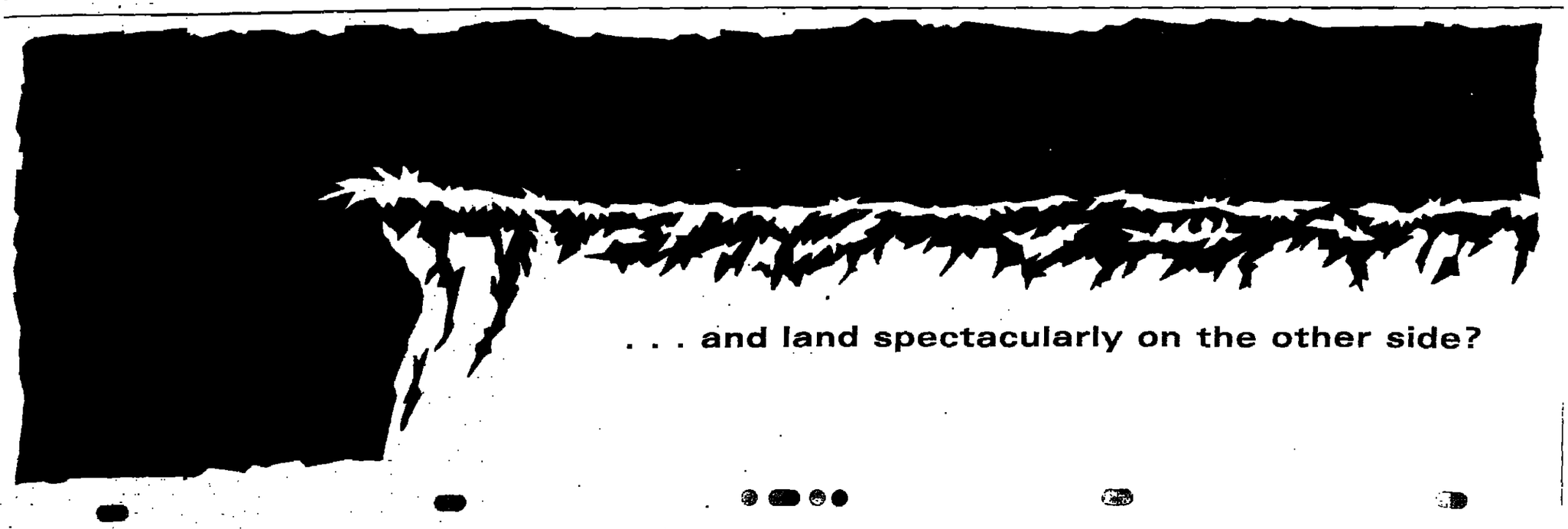
In recent years, Rushdie has travelled widely in Britain and abroad, giving lectures and attending meetings that have sometimes been well-advertised in advance. Earlier this week, he gave a reading of his works in Vienna.

The Danish government had initially said that Mr Rushdie might be in danger in Copenhagen because the police had other urgent matters to deal with, above all the threat of Nordic biker gangs.

One such gang recently fired a rocket-propelled missile into another gang's headquarters in the Danish capital, killing two people.

However, there were immediate protests from human rights groups and politicians in Denmark and abroad.

"I'm disappointed that we sent out a signal which can be interpreted as if we're falling on our knees before the Iranian regime," said Bjoern Elmqvist, a member of the Danish Radical Party.



news

I'm no Messiah, says the new head of Ridings

Judith Judd
Education Editor

The man appointed yesterday to the most difficult job in education - the headship of the Ridings School, Halifax - says he is "no Messiah" and cannot turn round the school on his own.

Calderdale Council closed the school on Thursday after two members of staff were assaulted. One, a supply teacher in French, had her breast fondled by a 15-year-old boy.

Mr Clark, at present head of a grant maintained school near the Ridings, refused to say whether he would agree to the expulsions which striking teachers at the school are demanding before they will return to work.

And he appealed to journalists to leave the school alone so that he could restore a normal routine.

Mr Clark, head of Rastrick School, told ITN: "This is the last chance for the Ridings School. I don't really want to make any comments on exclusions because I don't know who should be excluded and who shouldn't.

"It may be that some children will be better off with a more varied curriculum. I will be looking at the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school."

He said later that his job would be to restore the morale of everyone in the school. He rejected the idea that the school was close to anarchy: he knew there were many good staff employed there and that most of the pupils were well-behaved.

Coun. Stephen Pearson, a Liberal Democrat and former Rastrick governors, described the job at the Ridings as "the biggest professional challenge in secondary education" but said that Mr Clark had successfully turned round his present school. Four years ago 36 per cent of pupils got five good GCSEs. This year the figure was 49 per cent. . .

He had got rid of failing teachers, set up a motorbike group to keep pupils off the streets and had won funding for new playing fields from the lottery.

"He's not one of your open-toe sandalled, bushy-bearded, anorak wearing seventies-style teachers," he said.

Senior inspectors who visited the Ridings this week will deliver their report to Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education on Tuesday. If they say it is failing, she could order a team of experts - an education association - to take over the school which might decide to close it down.

David Blunkett, the shadow secretary of state for education, attacked Calderdale council for "benevolent inaction". He said the council should not wait for the school to be declared failing but should draw up its action plan at once.

That should include the removal of the worst pupils and a review of teaching standards. The appointment of a grant maintained school head by the Labour council roused speculation that the authority might be hoping to avert the school's takeover.

Parents lay blame on teachers

Charlie Bain

Outside the firmly locked doors of the Ridings, a group of seven girls posed for photographs under a banner saying "support the innocent". The school may be closed, but the arguments over who is responsible for the breakdown in discipline continued.

Parents were still angry at the closure and blamed the teachers for the lack of control. One couple were considering legal action while a mother whose son was among the 600 sent home on Thursday said the teachers couldn't cope and were unruly themselves.

None of this bothered the group of seven girls who have formed an action group calling themselves "Good Kids Win", in an attempt to make the school a safer and more pleasant place. "Seventeen people have already signed our petition," said Jo Lovell, 15. "We just want to be able to work hard and enjoy everything the school has to offer."

A written statement, scrawled in coloured ink on a piece of A4 paper, was handed out. It said that most of the pupils got on well with the staff and a lot of effort was put in outside school hours to help the pupils succeed. "We have been disgusted by many of the comments made in the media over the past few days," it read. "We think there are a lot of pupils in the school who support the staff but are too frightened to say so."

Zoe Taylor, 15, leading the group, is studying for seven GCSEs and wants to become a nurse. "If we go for an interview and say we're from the Ridings school it will pull us down," she said. "Doors will be closed before they are even opened."

For many parents, the teachers are to blame. One mother Diane Griffiths, whose 11-year-old son David has just started at the school, said she had complained to the council and the chairman of the governors last month after he was allegedly physically abused by a member of staff.

"You hear all about the children attacking their teachers but you hear nothing about the teachers abusing the pupils," she said. "My son was assaulted by a teacher for banging his ruler on the desk and giggling with classmates.

"The teacher grabbed him and ripped his jumper, dragged him out of his seat, threw him against a desk and then threw him out of a class."

Mrs. Griffiths, a single mother in her thirties, also said that she was appalled at the way the staff just threw the children on to the street with an explanatory note on Thursday.

Another disgruntled parent, Sheriden Walton, whose children, Chantel, 14, and Jamie, 15, both attend the school, said she felt that the appointment of new headmaster, Peter Clarke, would do nothing to help discipline.

"How's it going to help with these pupils?" she asked "In the end we'll just be back to square one. I can't see a way forward for the school as it is now."

When asked what she felt about sending her children to a school where other pupils were alleged to have sexually abused the staff, she replied: "It's immensely worrying. If it happens to a member of staff then it could easily happen to a child as well."

Both Mrs Griffiths and Mrs Walton feel that the breakdown in discipline is mainly down to a hard core of around 12 pupils whom they believe should be expelled. "They should deal with them one at a time and get rid of the main trouble-makers," said Mrs Griffiths. "Then discipline the rest."

Later in the morning, the girl who was said to have slammed a door in the face of the computer teacher Frazer Coxon on Thursday morning made a guest appearance outside the school, to the delight of the waiting press. Vicky Crabtree, 14, stood by the gates and smiled for waiting cameramen. "I did nothing," she shrieked. "I did slam the door but Mr Coxon was nowhere near it."

As one resident from the nearby Ovenden estate said: "The whole situation has turned into a circus. You can't discipline these kids – they just love the attention too much."

Oot of classs: Zoe Taylor and fellow members of the Ridings School action group. the school's problems will pull them down, they say Photograph: Asadour Guzelian

Uphill task: Peter Clarke, the Ridings' new headteacher

Why there will be more sink schools

Analysis

There will be more Ridings Schools. The Halifax comprehensive, closed after assaults on two teachers, is a warning for the future. Politicians' devotion to parental choice, first espoused by the Government and taken up by Labour, has polarised schools. Middle-class schools are becoming more middle-class. Schools like the Ridings are having to cope with growing numbers of difficult children.

All the research shows that choice helps to create sink schools. A study from Edinburgh University shows that in Scotland where parental choice was introduced earlier than in England the result was to concentrate the most deprived pupils in particular schools.

Comprehensives in Britain, far from ending social class divisions, have increased them. Middle class parents who choose to remain within the state system simply pick schools with plenty of other middle class children. Recent research from Caroline Benn and from Clyde Chitty of Birmingham University shows that comprehensive schools are less comprehensive in their intake than 20 years ago.

That is not simply the result of a new emphasis on parental choice. Government policies encouraging schools to compete for pupils, to pit themselves against in each other in examination league tables and to select more of their pupils all increase the difference between haves and have-nots. The Ridings School has to compete for pupils with two grant maintained grammar schools

Yet there is more to the collapse of the Ridings than politics. There are inner city schools with dozens of difficult pupils which do not have to be closed. There are also - as the union demanding the expulsion of at least 20 pupils might note - similar schools which expel only one or two pupils a term and where more than 7 per cent of pupils get five or more top GCSE grades. The notion that pupils at the Ridings are uniquely awful won't wash.

Nor is it likely that the change of head will, by itself, solve the problem. Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, refused to comment on the Ridings earlier this week.But he did say that in other schools boring and ineffective teaching was often responsible for indiscipline.

As for Calderdale Council, the local authority, it has twiddled its thumbs for far too long. Local authorities cannot hide behind the excuse that the Government has stripped them of power to intervene.

Part of the trouble is undoubtedly financial. There are not enough special schools or pupil referral units to take pupils who are unmanageable.

Part lies in the determination of teachers, undervalued, even reviled by a succession of politicians and the public, to assert their rights by refusing to teach the most unruly pupils. They have had enough and their anger is understandable.

The danger is that they and no-one else will become the sole arbiters of which children can be taught in schools.

Judith Judd

Firearms Bill: Howard publishes proposals as figures show that cost of compensation could be double the official estimates

Unionists set to back Tories on handguns

Jason Bennetto
Crime Correspondent

Prospects of a total handgun ban receded yesterday after the Government's proposals to outlaw 80 per cent of pistols received an important boost from the Ulster Unionists.

But as Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, published the Firearms Bill it emerged that the cost of compensating gun owners could be more than double the early official estimates, rising to £50m.

Labour and the Liberal Democrats, backed by the parents and supporters of the Dunblane victims, had hoped to overturn the Bill and force an all-out ban. However, the nine Ulster Unionist MPs announced yesterday that they would not vote against the Government. They are expected to abstain. This will help the Tories defend their fragile majority although the outcome is still in the balance, as a significant number of Tory MPs are threatening to vote against the Bill.

Mr Howard yesterday declared that the Firearms (Amendment) Bill would give Britain some of the toughest firearms controls in the world. The measures are a response to the Dunblane massacre, in which 16 children and a teacher were killed by Thomas Hamilton.

Under the proposals all handguns above .22 calibre will be banned, resulting in the destruction of around 160,000 of the 200,000 legally held handguns.

Enthusiasts will be able to use less powerful .22 pistols only at registered gun clubs. The Bill also details tough new rules on gun sales, mail order, police powers, certification, ammunition and gun-club security.

It provides for stiff sanctions against anyone retaining banned weapons or holding the smaller guns outside registered clubs – with a maximum penalty of 10 years' imprisonment.

Owners of the smaller .22 pistols will have to surrender their weapons to a police station for safe-keeping until they can arrange to join a licensed club.

The question of compensation is likely to be one of the most contentious aspects of the Bill, with the Government estimating that the cost of paying firearm enthusiasts and dealers will range from £25m to £50m. The previous estimate was £24m. In addition, administrative costs will be between £3m and £5m.

Mr Howard said yesterday that there were no plans to compensate gun shops or clubs for loss of business or pay for ammunition or accessories. The shooting lobby claim that the true cost of compensation was up to £1bn.

The Government has managed to make considerable savings by agreeing to allow owners to keep antique handguns and pistols acquired before 1946 as trophies of war. The question of so called "heritage" weapons or collectors' pieces is still under review.

Compensation payments are expected to start in April and will be based on market value of the firearm on 15 October.

Asked why the Government was opposed to a total ban, Mr Howard said: "There is the risk that banning all handguns might drive some target shooters underground. This would mean that the public had less protection from gun attacks rather than more."

The prospects of the Bill's success were improved after the Ulster Unionists made it clear that they would not support a total ban.

John Taylor, the party's deputy leader, said: "We do not believe that it's necessary to abolish all handguns, as some people are suggesting. We think that's a rather emotional reaction to the tragedy of Dunblane." The party has yet to make a final decision on whether to support the Government or abstain.

Labour is still pressing for a total ban and demanding a free Commons vote on the issue, but has already made it clear that it will not stand in the way of tighter firearms restrictions.

Jack Straw, shadow home secretary, said: "By continuing to permit at least 40,000 .22 handguns to be licensed for sport, this Bill will not provide the protection the public need."

Some pro-shooting Tory backbenchers say they will oppose the Bill's ban on the ownership of all higher-calibre handguns and other Conservative MPs insist they want a total ban. Tory MP Robert Hughes (Harrow W), who is campaigning for the prohibition of all handguns, said: "The Government have made a huge error of judgement. They've handled this issue so well, and now they're ruining it at the last moment by not giving us a free vote."

The main proposals

The main proposals of the Firearms (Amendment) Bill are:

* An outright ban on all handguns above .22 calibre - about 160,000 of the 200,000 legally held pistols.
* Illegal possession of a prohibited weapon or a .22 outside a licensed pistol club carries a maximum penalty of 10 years' imprisonment.
* There will be a ban on expanding ammunition - the kind which fractures on impact, causing more serious wounds.
* Mail-order sales will effectively be banned.
* Gun owners will be obliged to tell the police if they buy, sell, destroy, transfer or deactivate any gun.
* Gun clubs will need a licence from the Home Office or Scottish Office and will have to satisfy police that their premises can offer the tightest security.
* There will be tighter police licensing. Applicants for a firearms certificate will have to demonstrate that they are fit to hold a firearm safely, and supply two references.

Obsolete art: Rachel Westlake, also a gunsmith, in her father's workshop with a Westlake Britarms .22 LR handgun Photograph: John Lawrence

Final shot for gunsmith as trade dries up

Charlie Bain

Two weeks ago, Alan Westlake was a thriving West Country gunsmith and the only manufacturer of .22-calibre semi-automatic competition pistols in Britain. Today, he is among an estimated 2,000 people set to lose their jobs as a result of the proposed legislation.

The 52-year-old former pistol champion runs his business from a workshop next to his house near Salisbury, Wiltshire, with the help of his 27-year-old daughter, Rachel. Of the five pistols he was working on this month, four customers have rung up and cancelled their orders since the Government announced the new controls. "One of the guns was 90 per cent finished," he said. "I've got one more Matchmaster gun to finish for a guy in Jersey and that will probably be the last one I'll ever make."

A mechanic by training, Mr Westlake spent 25 years in the Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers where he was five-times Army pistol champion. In 1980 he made the Great Britain team competing in the World Championships and Commonwealth Games and six years later became a national coach.

He learnt his trade working in the small-arms section of the regiment and after leaving the Army set himself up as a gunsmith making .22-calibre competition pistols at £725 a-piece.

As his reputation blossomed, he went on to make larger calibre pistols, mainly .32 and .38 handguns – both of which are set to be outlawed under the new government ban. Although .22 guns will still be legal, the stringent ownership rules outlined in the Cullen report and the possibility of a total handgun ban under a Labour government has meant that the market has dried up. Mr Westlake gives his business two months' survival time.

"I have no income, end of story," he said. "Every penny that I spend comes from my savings. When my savings go I'll have to sell my house. It's no good saying to me go out and borrow the money because if you were a bank manager would you loan money to a gunsmith at this time?"

Mr Westlake believes the estimated government compensation package of £1bn for members of the shooting community who lose out under the new legislation will be too late for the pistol-makers. "We could be talking three years before the compensation comes through," he said. "I'll be finished by then."

The proposed new legislation has also had a devastating effect on Mr Westlake's family, particularly his daughter, Rachel, a qualified gunsmith and part-time helper, who runs her own fashion-design business.

"What has made me so angry is that various people in the local media have referred to my father as a killer because he makes guns," she said. "It's extremely hurtful and actually quite frightening that people can think in that way."

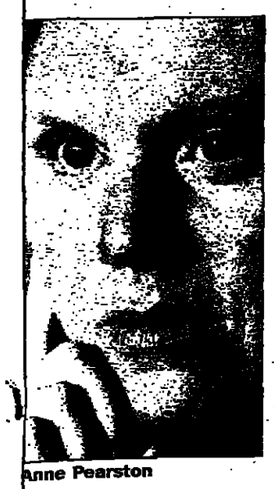
"These people do not know what they are talking about" Mr Westlake said. "Guns are not weapons, they are sporting goods ... A gun on its own never killed anybody. It requires somebody to use it to be dangerous. You don't blame the gun, you blame the person."

He accepts that tighter gun controls are necessary but feels that the Government was edged into a corner by public hysteria after the Dunblane massacre. "Thomas Hamilton felt rejected by the shooting community and he is getting his own back on us from the grave," he said.

Mr Westlake is considering moving to the United States but in the meantime is channelling all his efforts into promoting the newly formed Sportsman's Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, a pressure group fighting the ban which in just a week has recruited more than 6,000 members.

For Mr Westlake, battling for the gun enthusiast takes his mind off the demise of his profession. "It's a sad day when you realise that your skills are no longer required in Great Britain," he said.

‘How long before the gun community moves to take shooting back from small bore to full bore?’



Anne Pearston

Ann Pearston

Britain is considered one of the world's safest places in which to live, work and visit. But the last 30 years have seen a deterioration in our society for a combination of reasons. What is certain is that the gun culture does exist, as do marginalised citizens. Any firearms licensing procedures will inevitably be subjective.

It is generally agreed that future aberrant behaviour cannot be predicted. The conclusion that most people have reached is that we are safer without handguns than with them. Those of us who have arrived at that conclusion question the values, judgement and self interest of those whose wishes fall short of that target.

We now officially know the government's proposals. Not only are they a compromise on public safety, they are illogical. The government have seen fit to ban multi-shot guns over .22 calibre. But .22 calibre multi-shot weapons are just as fast and as lethal. Even a single-shot .22 pistol can be reloaded in five seconds. The Government's published plans, if they become law, will leave up to 40,000 such weapons available.

Lord Cullen's condensing of the inquiry evidence was excellent. But his recommendations were narrow, vague and legalistic. The Government has converted them into a Bill in a narrow, blinkered way. Key questions that should have been addressed in the light of Hungerford, Dunblane and the intervening years have been conveniently ignored in the headlong rush for Royal assent. These questions now need to be asked and answered.

Should convicted and suspected paedophiles be barred for life from possessing firearms? Guns are an easy way to attract vulnerable boys to a person. Should society allow non-vocational, recreational firearms to be held in residential urban properties rather than be kept fully disabled in secure gun clubs? Should air weapons be brought within the firearms licensing procedures? Currently 66 per cent of all notifiable offences of personal and property damage involving firearms relate to their misuse. Should the police be given the power during the currency of a certificate or licence to inspect secure storage arrangements - unannounced? This may help prevent the high level of suicides among relatives and friends of firearms holders. Should the police be allowed to revoke firearms licences based on local 'common knowledge' or unease about a person? After all, this was all they ever had on Thomas Hamilton.

The question of a national database of firearms holders based on National Insurance or NHS numbers has similarly not been addressed; neither has the matter of allocating unique serial numbers to all guns. This idea was suggested in 1972. If it had been done back then, we would have had 24 years of data by now.

I have suggested that MPs, police, the shooting community and groups such as Snowdrop and the Gun Control Network work together in order that future legislation is made watertight and unambiguous, and in order that guidance to the police is equally clear.

We need to make society safer and we need to co-operate for the greater benefit and safety of all. It took only eight and a half years after Hungerford before relaxation of the firearms licensing procedures set in. How long will it take before the shooting community move to take shooting from small bore back to full bore again?

The gun lobby are claiming that the Government today have gone much further than Lord Cullen. They have not.

Ann Pearston is co-founder of the Snowdrop Appeal, the pressure group set up after the Dunblane massacre to demand a ban on all handguns.

news

Nurse who sabotaged life-saving equipment jailed for five years

James Cusick

A former nurse who deliberately altered crucial settings on life-saving machines in an intensive-care ward, risking the lives of severely ill patients, was yesterday jailed for five years.

The actions of Amanda Jenkinson, 37, who carried out the medical sabotage in order to discredit her colleagues and promote her own abilities, were described as "unique" by the judge in Nottingham Crown Court, who also criticised her as "wicked" and "selfish".

Jenkinson, who began her nursing career in Gloucester in 1978, was convicted on a majority jury decision of 10-2 of causing grievous bodily harm with intent to Kathleen Temple, 67, at Bassetlaw District General Hospital in Worksop, Nottinghamshire, in 1993. Earlier the jury had cleared her of two other charges of attempting to cause grievous bodily harm to other patients.

Last May, she appeared at a court hearing charged with murdering a 59-year-old patient, Winifred Cashman. The charge was later dropped after a court ruled that there was insufficient evidence to proceed.

Yesterday in court Mr Justice Owen told Jenkinson: " You have been found guilty of an offence which is hard to understand." Although he said there was no suggestion that Jenkinson was suffering from any mental disorder or illness and that she had been fully responsible for her actions, police in Nottingham revealed that Jenkinson was suffering from a psychiatric condition and is believed to have been treated for depression following an abortion in 1982.

Following the court decision North Nottinghamshire Health Authority, which is responsible for Bassetlaw where Jenkinson had worked since 1990, announced that they would be commissioning an independent inquiry. Barbara Meeke, director of the authority, said: "This has been a very traumatic time for patients, staff and relatives. We are now commissioning an independent inquiry to review the circumstances at Bassetlaw hospital during the period in question to see if there are any wider lessons to be learnt."

The investigations surrounding the incidents on the intensive-care unit (ITU) where Jenkinson worked developed into one the largest ever held inside the National Health Service.

In February 1994, one month after Jenkinson was suspended by the hospital, the police were brought in. Their searches widened to eight other hospitals where there had been 57 other unusual incidents involving several hundred patients. Medical files from 1982 taken from all the hospitals where Jenkinson had worked were examined, including Nottingham City Hospital, Gloucestershire Royal, Southmead Hospital in Bristol, John Radcliffe in Oxford, St George's in south London, Central Middlesex, West London, and the Northern General in Sheffield.

Central to the prosecution's case against Jenkinson was the continuing theme that she felt her official nursing grade, D, was too low for her abilities. She changed the setting on ITU machines in order make other staff look incompetent. One witness, Rosa Jones, a nurse at Bassetlaw, described Jenkinson as a "loner". Another colleague, Dr Anthony Dixon, who was in charge of the ITU, said Jenkinson felt her job was beneath her. Her defence counsel's suggestion that although she was truculent and stubborn she was nevertheless "intensely kind to her patients", was clearly not accepted by most of the jury.

Uncovering just what had happened inside the ITU at Bassetlaw was difficult. Police had to establish links between alleged tampering and any deaths of patients. But many patients were already critically ill before they were admitted to intensive care.

During the four-week trial, the court heard how Jenkinson, had altered a ventilator Mrs Temple at Bassetlaw in November 1993. Mrs Temple was admitted to the hospital suffering from chronically obstructed airways. She was put on a ventilator. Initially, there was good progress over 10 days. But late one night Jenkinson switched the breathing control on the ventilator from a high rate to low, leaving her with 0.8 assisted breaths every minute instead of eight. The switch was discovered the next morning and staff alerted. Mrs Temple's condition deteriorated and she died three days later.

Jenkinson claimed that she was not on the four-bed ward at the time and could not have altered the machine.

The court heard that Jenkinson was never slow to criticise her colleagues. Peter Joyce QC, for the prosecution, said that she had stage-managed events in order to manufacture inadequacies and highlight her belief in her own superiority.

Jenkinson was also accused of switching off a machine supplying sedatives to Brenda Joyce, 61, admitted to the unit in December 1993 suffering an asthma attack. The jury accepted Jenkinson's defence that she had not touched the machine.

In another incident in January 1994, Jenkinson was accused of switching off a sedative machine attached to Joyce Charlton. Ms Charlton, a patient at Rampton secure hospital, was admitted with a suspected broken neck. The jury accepted that Jenkinson had not touched this machine either.

Throughout the court case Jenkinson claimed that staff had conspired against her. "They hate my guts," she told the jury.

When the verdict was announced, after the jury had deliberated for eight and a half hours, Anne Rafferty QC, for the defence, said: "It is a very puzzling end to a first-rate nursing career spanning 20 years."

Guilty: Amanda Jenkinson being driven away from Nottingham Crown Court yesterday. Below, Bassetlaw hospital

Ministers said to be soft on terrorism

Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

Ministers and police were accused of being slow or unwilling to tackle state sponsors of terrorism in Britain "for fear of losing trade and markets".

Evidence published with the Home Office inquiry report by Lord Lloyd of Berwick, a senior law lord, claims Britain is also putting exports above the fight against terrorism - a charge strongly denied last night.

The allegations, which have strong echoes of the charges against the Government in the Scott inquiry into the arms to Iraq scandal, were described as dynamite by opposition sources and are certain to lead to demands for action in the Commons next week.

Lord Lloyd is urging the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, to take new powers to tackle terrorist groups who use London as a base for raising money or organising acts of terrorism abroad. He calls for a change to the law on conspiracy to procedure those "who conspire to commit terrorist acts abroad". He also suggests copying the approach used by France and Germany to proscribe named terrorist organisations to ban them from fund-raising.

Lord Lloyd makes it clear that investigating trading links was not part of his remit for reviewing Britain's anti-terror laws, but volume two of the report contains a serious indictment of the authorities by Paul Wilkinson, professor of international relations at St Andrews University. "We should note the apparent reluctance of ministers and the police to utilise fully and rigorously the powers they already have to seek out terrorist assets and have them frozen, pending the result of criminal proceedings.

"There is a notable slowness (or unwillingness?) to use such powers against state sponsors of terrorism for fear of losing trade and markets," Professor Wilkinson asserts. The "present ambivalence" in the UK's policy towards Iran should be seen in the wider context that Iran is engaged with client Islamic groups in trying to undermine the Middle East peace process, which is so vital to future stability, he adds. "Yet Iran is being rewarded with more access to British trade and services."

The Home Office last night played down the allegations as an academic study.

"Obviously the professor is entitled to give his views but we are looking at the recommendations of Lord Lloyd, not at the academic report."

But Lord Lloyd says in his report that he has drawn heavily on the special report commissioned by his inquiry from Professor Wilkinson. Jack Straw, Labour's shadow home secretary, said: "These are very serious matters and Labour will be calling for Malcolm Rifkind (Foreign Secretary) to make a full explanation of these grave allegations." Britain has a trade embargo against selling military equipment to Iran but has no embargo for other goods. A bilateral agreement was recently agreed to repay £20m in debts as a first step to lifting a block by the Export Credit Guarantee Department on credit for Iran.

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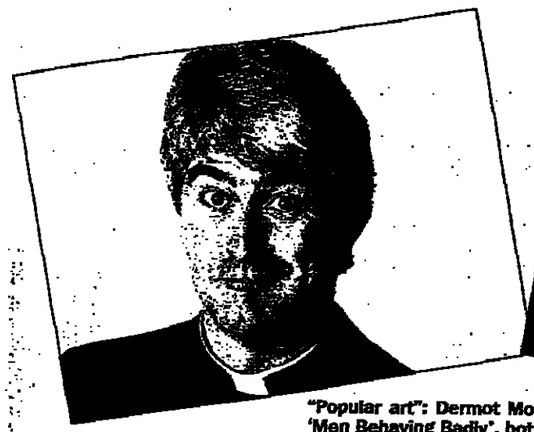

"Popular art": Dermot Morgan as Father Ted and 'Men Behaving Badly', both nominated for Emmys

'People's Century' 'and 'The House', showing Jeremy Isaacs, director, at the opera's new site

America gives Brit TV the flickering prize

Nominated: Wallace and Gromit, 'A Close Shave'

David Lister
Arts News Editor

The successor to Britpop could be Brit TV. Indeed, British television programmes look like doing rather better than contemporary British rock music in conquering America.

The short-lists for the international Emmy Awards – known as the Oscars of the small screen – were announced yesterday and are dominated by British programmes.

The lists come only two months after a night of triumph for Britain at the main Emmy awards, in which American programmes competed.

In the light entertainment category all three nominations are for UK programmes.

For the international awards American programmes are excluded. But in competition with the rest of the world, Britain has 10 out of the 18 nominations. The programmes range from *Men Behaving Badly* to *The House* – the behind-the-scenes documentary on the Royal Opera. Seven were produced by or in conjunction with the BBC.

The three programmes nominated in the light entertainment category, which the American organisers of the competition call "popular arts", are Wallace and Gromit's *A Close Shave* by Aardman Animations and BBC Bristol, *Father Ted* by Hat Trick for C4 and *Men Behaving Badly*, produced by Hartswood Films for the BBC.

In the arts documentary section, two out of three are British: *Children of the Revolution*, an Illuminations production for the BBC, and *The House* by Double Exposure, also for the BBC.

Recognition for *People's Century*, the enthralling history series told largely through ordinary people, is given in the nominations. "People's Century – 1933: Master Race", produced by the BBC and WGBH is nominated in the documentary section, with *Eleven Men Against Eleven* produced by Hat Trick for C4, and *The Precious Blood* by BBC Northern Ireland short-listed in the drama category.

British children's programmes rank highly: *Wise Up* by Carlton for C4 and "Newsround Extra: War Child" by the BBC are two out of the three nominations in that category.

A BBC spokeswoman said: "We are delighted at this success in the nominations. These are prestigious awards in which Britain has by no means always done well."

Momentum has been building for British programmes in the USA over the past two years. *Absolutely Fabulous*, *Drop The Dead Donkey* and *The Politician's Wife* have all been successful in the States.

Britain has already scored a big success at the annual Emmy awards ceremony in September (where the Americans do compete) when Helen Mirren and Alan Rickman won the best actress and actor awards, and *Gulliver's Travels* won five award statuettes.

Of the other nominated programmes for the international Emmys, three are from France, two are from Sweden and one each from Canada, Holland and Mexico. A record number of entries, 330, were received.

The winners will be announced at the International Emmy Awards Gala on 25 November at the New York Hilton.

Showing the way: The States enjoyed Ab Fab

Gang thugs jailed for torment that turned to murder

A man aged 21 and a 16-year-old boy who kicked and punched a mild-mannered teenager to death in his own front garden were jailed for murder yesterday.

Birmingham Crown Court heard that 19-year-old Anthony Erskine walked out of the family home in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, in January, to act as peacemaker and talk to local youths who had been harassing his family and abusing his father.

But the quiet young man was met by a volley of punches and kicks from Mark Hemmens, 21, and Damian Collins, 16.

The blows and kicks left the seven-and-a-half-stone teenager lying unconscious and the brutal assault continued as he lay on the ground, causing him to choke on his own blood.

The jury of seven women and five men took eight and a half hours to return majority verdicts of guilty on both defendants to the charge of murder. The majority in both cases was 10-2.

The 10-day trial had been told that on the evening of 3 January, Mr Erskine's 53-year-old father Harry was walking home from work at the local cannery when he came across Hemmens standing with other youths on a street corner.

Hemmens, who smelt of alcohol, verbally abused Mr Erskine, telling him "I hate your guts, Erskine. What are you doing to do about it?"

Mr Erskine senior told the court in evidence that such abuse was just another example of a sustained campaign against his family by local youths, including an earlier incident in September last year when Hemmens had threatened to smash the windows of the family home and damage their car.

Hemmens and Collins admitted to police they were part of a gang which picked on Anthony and his twin brother Ian, and had directed abuse at other members of the family, including another brother, Gary, aged 23, his sister Natalie, 18, and their mother Dorothy, 47.

After returning home, Mr Erskine mentioned the trouble to his son who left the house saying he was going to "talk to them and sort it out". The jury was told that Hemmens pushed the slightly-built Mr Erskine backwards and the pair rained down blows as he tried to curl up into a ball to protect his head and groin.

His father, who was standing just feet away, said the two treated his son's head like a football.

Within two minutes they had fled, leaving Mr Erskine dead on the lawn.

The pair went to Shipston-on-Stour, 12 miles away, where they hoped to be hidden by friends, but were forced to return to Stratford on foot and were later found by police hiding in the loft of a house.

Both admitted they had been involved in the violence but denied an intention to kill.

Hemmens, of Justins Avenue, Stratford, held his head in his hands and fought back tears as the murder verdicts were delivered. Collins mouthed "No way" and shouted to his grandmother "Don't worry" before being led away.

Jailing Hemmens for life, and ordering Collins to be detained at Her Majesty's pleasure, Mr Justice Keene said: "It was a vicious and cowardly attack – the two of you against one. The worst of the violence was inflicted whilst he was lying quite helpless on the ground."

The judge said he was satisfied it was Collins who had kicked Mr Erskine repeatedly to the head.

After the case, Mrs Erskine said: "My son has got justice. I am pleased. But my son is dead and two more lives have been ruined. It doesn't solve anything." She told reporters that in 1988 she had launched a petition to deal with local hooligans but said she now wondered if Anthony would still be alive if she had not done so.

"Sometimes I wonder if I had kept my mouth shut would my son still be alive. I don't know what I feel any more. All I know is that had we moved out of the house would he be still be alive? This is not the end but another chapter in a terrible nightmare. We can not look forward to the future with any confidence. There have been threats since my son died. The harassment has not stopped."

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هكذا من الاصل

Criminal vetting for millions of workers

Jason Bennetto
Crime Correspondent

Up to eight million people seeking a job are expected to be vetted each year to check if they have a criminal record, under government proposals published yesterday.

Penal reform groups condemned the system, contained in the Police Bill, and which will cost £5-£10 an inquiry, saying it would make most ex-offenders unemployable.

The Home Office also published details of a national squad to help fight organised crime, and proposals to allow police to break into homes and plant electronic bugs.

The main proposals

* Establishment of a National Crime Squad in England Wales.

* Set up an agency to supply information on millions of criminal records to employers and workers.

* Officially sanction police and Customs officers to break into properties and plant electronic bugs.

* Place the National Criminal Intelligence Service on a UK-wide statutory footing.

The biggest surprise in the Bill is the scale of business expected to be undertaken by the proposed Criminal Records Agency. In the first year it is expected 2.5 million checks will be done, costing £18m. It is expected to rise to 8 million a year, worth £60m in revenue. The agency, with at least 400 employees, will provide three levels of checks, according to the sensitivity of the job.

The first, a Criminal Conviction Certificate (CCCs), will be issued to individuals and contain details of unspent convictions. The second, "full", or criminal-record certificates, will contain details of cautions and convictions, including offences that are spent – sentences of 30 months or less are wiped clean after a set period. These will be used for sensitive jobs such as those involving regular contact with children, and health workers. The highest level, an "enhanced" check, will be available only to people with regular, supervised access to children or for certain statutory licensing purposes, such as gambling and the lottery, and judges and magistrates.

The Home Office believes a criminal-records check could become standard practice for all new employees. People who try to use or make a fake certificate, or use one belonging to someone else, could face six months' jail or a £5,000 fine.

Harry Fletcher, of the National Association of Probation Officers, said: "Given the current competitive nature of the job market, the possibility that potential employees will need to obtain the certificate ought to ensure that most ex-prisoners will never work again. This is recipe for further crime."

Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, said increased access to criminal records would improve protection of the public.

The Bill also proposes establishment of a National Crime Squad, an amalgamation of the existing six regional crime squads, to support local forces investigating serious crime. It will work with the National Criminal Intelligence Service, which is to become a statutory agency outside control of central government. Both organisations will be scrutinised by two new watchdog authorities.

The third aspect of the Bill is to make police and Customs guidelines involving secret surveillance operations part of the law. Chief constables will be allowed to authorise officers to break into properties and plant listening devices if they believe it is necessary as part of an investigation into serious crime.

The measures are opposed by the Liberty civil-rights group, which says they are open to abuse. John Wadham, the director, said: "Clearly our homes are no longer our castles when the police can authorise themselves to bug, burgle and trespass anywhere they like, without a court order."

It has also emerged that the Government is considering adding an amendment to the Police Bill which would enable evidence obtained by the police and intelligence services during telephone tapping to be admissible in court in cases of national security, such as terrorism.

But because of lack of time it looks increasingly likely that this measure will be shelved.

A tale of two court cases: McLibel becomes longest trial for a century

Food for thought: Helen Steel and Dave Morris – 'a milestone for us, but a millstone for McDonald's'. Right: An artist's impression of the Tichborne trial Illustration Hulton Getty

Hearing becomes the biggest Mac of all

Patricia Wynn Davies
Legal Affairs Editor

Someone had brought along a model of a milestone to the picket outside the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand. The "McLibel" trial had reached its 292nd day – making it the longest of any kind in British history.

To anyone who has ever had dealings with the courts, it is the kind of record that inspires only weariness and depression.

But Helen Steel and Dave Morris, the McLibel defendants, were in doughty mood yesterday. "It's a milestone for us and critics of the food industry, but a millstone for the $30bn dollar a year McDonald's corporation."

The McLibel Support Campaign is comparing the marathon battle with the fast-food giant to the 18th century Tichborne personation case, cited in the *Guinness Book of Records*, which comprised a civil and a criminal trial lasting a total of 291 days.

Apart from a connection in both to South American rainforests, any similarities between them end there.

In the Tichborne case, where an imposter posed as the heir to a fortune after being presumed to have met his death in the South American jungles, society ladies crammed the public galleries and the Chief Justice had to institute a ticket system, *Botham v Khan* style.

The public never turns up for the McLibel saga, a non-jury trial before Mr Justice Bell with no histrionics, just painstaking, detailed allegation and counter-allegation. Even the ever-conscientious Press Association news agency has given up trying to make a story of the proceedings as the two litigants in person seek to refute each and every allegation by Richard Rampton, McDonald's ultra-smooth QC.

For Ms Steel, a 31-year-old otherwise full-time single parent, and Mr Morris, 42, who works in a club, there was no option but to fight the case after McDonald's served writs in September 1990 over a London Greenpeace (no relation to the worldwide Greenpeace organisation) leaflet entitled "What's Wrong With McDonald's".

Three other defendants reluctantly apologised over the six-page factsheet's allegations over the promotion of "junk" food, exploitation of workers and animals, advertising to children and damage to the environment. For Ms Steel and Mr Morris, veterans of CND, the anti-poll tax campaign, the Wapping picket and the miners' strike, caving in was not in their nature.

As the McDonald's corporation has thrown seemingly unlimited resources at the case, the exercise appears increasingly futile. The McLibel Support Campaign claims that 2 million copies of the allegedly libellous leaflet have been handed out in the UK alone since the case began.

And in a foretaste of a European Court of Human Rights battle still to come, Ms Steel and Mr Morris complain that the UK's "oppressive" libel laws have denied them legal aid but allowed the corporation to demand proof over a wide range of "common sense" issues in the leaflet, like the fact that packaging ends up as litter.

The case, which the image-conscious corporation hoped to either settle or dispose of within a month, has become a nightmare, spawning what seems be a largely libel-proof, ever-growing anti-McDonald's information exchange.

At the McLibel Support Campaign, Dan Mills, a 28-year-old former trainee solicitor with the city law firm Lovell White Durrant, claims thousands of supporters round the world, while McInformation Network, an international network of volunteers, claims its McSpotlight internet site – containing masses of everything McDonald's would rather people were not told – has been accessed more than 4 million times.

Try as it may, McDonald's is waging an increasingly uphill – perhaps impossible – battle to force the genie back into the bottle.

Marathon man exposed as fraud

Luke Jarvis

The Tichborne personation case, the longest trial in the history of British justice, concerned the dispute over the inheritance of the Tichborne Estate, Hampshire, estimated at a value of £24,000.

The Baron of Tichborne, Sir Alfred Doughty-Tichborne, had died in 1866 and was to be succeeded by his infant son. Against all expectations the trustee, Lady Doughty-Tichborne received news of the return of her late husband's elder brother, Robert Tichborne, presumed dead, in the South American jungles he had ventured into 18 years beforehand.

The civil hearing of the brother's claims to the estate, which began in May 1871, lasted 103 days and centred on ascertaining whether or not the man was actually Robert Tichborne. Doubts over his identity stemmed from the distinct difference in manner and appearance between the man who left for the South American wilderness and the man who returned from it.

Every aspect of Tichborne's life was examined in minute detail: including the matter of whether his earlobes dangled freely or were attached to his cheeks. Newspapers reported that "the galleries were full of ladies and it became necessary for the Chief Justice to regulate admissions to the court by ticket". The trial became like an aristocratic version of *Eastenders* with every respectable Victorian requiring their daily dosage of humour and gossip from the case.

Friends and relatives of Robert Tichborne told the court they remembered him as being thinner and not "knock-kneed" as he now was.

Witnesses were imported from Australia and South America but much of the evidence was circumstantial and some witnesses did actually recall likenesses between the old Robert Tichborne and the new one that stood in court.

As the trial dragged on, the jury and judge became increasingly confused, and decided in March 1872 that it was unable to reach a decision.

A criminal case alleging impersonation was then held, lasting a further 188 days, and "Robert Tichborne" was eventually exposed as one Arthur Orton. He was sentenced to two consecutive terms of imprisonment and hard labour.

news

Bombed, battered, unbowed, Manchester gets back to business as usual

We have lift-off: Workmen continuing renovation and rebuilding work at Manchester's bomb-ravaged Arndale Centre yesterday Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

Jojo Moyes

The hoarding on the side of Manchester's bomb-blasted Arndale Centre didn't apply to Marks & Spencer but it might as well have done. "Back in business" it read in huge blue letters – "You can't keep a big name down."

The packed aisles in M&S's lingerie, food and Christmas gifts departments seemed to speak of the city centre's determination to do the same.

"It's just great to have it back open. I couldn't wait to get down here – we were determined to be here for the first day," said Clare Winterburn from Chorlton.

"I've only been to town twice since the bombing. There didn't seem any point coming. But I've missed my M&S," she said.

So, apparently had the staff. Peter Winter, 55, of the menswear department, had been relocated to a suburban branch during the five months it took Marks & Spencer to open its replacement stores. He said staff were "really emotional" at returning to the city centre. "It was like a building site just two weeks ago it's amazing" he said.

Indeed, the only glum faces in the whole store yesterday appeared on those stuck in the lengthy queues for the checkout.

The original store and its office tower, destroyed in June when an IRA bomb devastated buildings over a one-mile radius, has yet to be demolished.

It will be two years before the opening of a replacement "flagship" store.

But yesterday's opening of two temporary M&S outlets in the city centre would seem to be an important symbolic, as well as economic, step in the recovery of the area – a fact reinforced by the presence of Sir Richard Greenbury, the company chairman.

"It sends a message that Manchester is back, ready for trading for Christmas" said a spokesman for the company.

Getting the two temporary stores open in such a short time had been "very difficult" and required the backing of M&S's considerable resources.

There certainly appeared to be nothing "temporary" about the plush and polished new branches, based in Lewis's department store and a few yards away in Spring Gardens.

Other smaller retailers, however, have not been as fortunate. At the far end of the Arndale Centre, the premature Christmas decorations and fairy lights could not hide the length of chipboard, scaffolding, and apologies for disruption. Or the deserted shopfronts still boasting "Summer" displays.

The council has ensured that many of the affected traders have been relocated, often in groups, but many have still not reopened.

"They've been shut all this time and there will still be some for whatever reason who have chosen not to relocate. But our estimate is of the 700 out of action at least 650 will be back within a fortnight" said Richard Leese, leader of the city council.

The cost of relocation has been largely met by £1.5m raised by the Lord Mayor's emergency fund. The final cost of rebuilding is expected to reach £1bn. Most of the money will come from the private sector and insurance, with some sought from the Government and the European Union.

Two weeks ago Mr Leese was among a delegation that met Michael Heseltine, the deputy prime minister, to inform him of the likely cost. "Obviously we're concerned about sufficient refunding. Obviously it would be a big list if they announce the refunding at the same time as we announce the plans for rebuilding next Tuesday" he said.

That is when the winning architectural team in an international competition to redesign the city centre will be announced.

> 'It sends a message that Manchester is back, ready for Christmas'.

Mr Leese said he would be disappointed if the rebuilding project did not just replace the city centre but significantly improve it. He expects some of the 70 [illegible] to be replaced by buildings "more sympathetic" to the city's heritage. "I suspect the city centre will be a lot more pleasant place to be, but certainly the business base will be increased; the retail, leisure, residential use and accessibility will also increase," he said.

And in Marks & Spencer yesterday there did not appear to be too many tears for the site destroyed by the bomb. "It was a public convenience, wasn't it? said Angela Cooper in the lingerie department. "I didn't come into town once when there was no M&S. I'll be back a lot more from now on."

هكذا من الاصل

Trust's old guard pulls up the drawbridge

Why 'democracy' in Britain's biggest charity means maintaining the status quo

Stephen Goodwin
Heritage Correspondent

The National Trust goes to the polls today in an election with a certainty of outcome that would make Messrs Major and Mawhinney green with envy.

Seventeen names have been put forward for the nine vacancies on the trust's 52-member council – the policy forum of Britain's largest charity. But nine of the 17 are actually sitting members who will simply be re-elected for another three years. The eight other candidates stand almost no chance of success.

Trust veterans would eat their tweedy caps if the eight pretenders swept home at today's annual general meeting in the Royal Festival Hall. Thousands of unmandated proxy votes which have already been sent to the chairman, Charles Nunneley, are expected to be used by him to ensure that respectful order is not upset.

Martin Drury: 'Proxy votes are gesture of confidence'

To Mr Nunneley, the gift of these proxies for use at his discretion, is an acknowledgement by the member that the chairman is better placed to know who is the right person for the proper running of the charity.

Director-general Martin Drury regards the system of voting, whether for council elections or deciding the issues of animal welfare which have riven the trust in recent years, as "highly democratic". He believes that the member who hands the chairman his or her vote is saying: "I would like to make a gesture of my confidence in this extraordinary organisation and the way it is run."

But to some activists, the system is unhealthy and potentially "downright sleazy". In a series of letters to *The Independent* last month, long-standing members portrayed the executive as patronising and élitist.

Required by Act of Parliament to preserve for the nation land and buildings of historic interest or natural beauty, the trust has 2.4 million members, an annual income of more than £110m and 3,200 staff. It is Britain's largest private landowner, with an estate of almost 1,000 square miles and 230 properties open to the public.

But for nearly all its 101 years, according to social historian John K Walton in a recently published paper, the trust has "celebrated a deeply conservative vision of Englishness", and idealised "the hierarchical society of the country house and the 'close' village".

Half the council members are elected and half appointed from conservation and recreation bodies. Day-to-day running of the trust is the responsibility of the executive committee and professional officers.

Today's AGM includes a plea for more openness in voting. On resolutions such as those in the past against deer-hunting or today's attempt to stop tenant farmers sending animals to livestock markets, there would be a statement revealing how the chairman had used the unmandated votes.

"Since AGM votes on resolutions are only advisory, the executive are not giving anything away except their right to conduct everything in the greatest secrecy," said Dr John Wilks, the retired Oxford physicist who submitted the resolution.

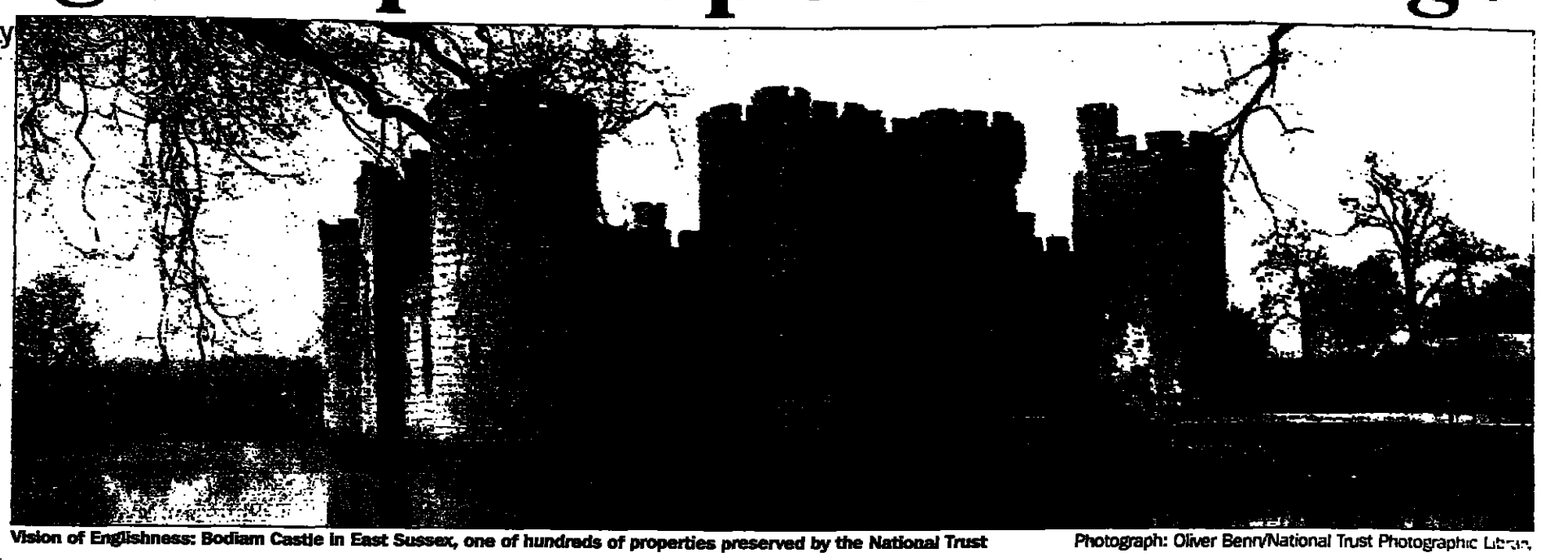
Without the "handbag vote" – the term coined in 1990 when Dame Jennifer Jenkins wielded 50,000 votes for the status quo – deer-hunting by hounds on trust land would have been rejected by a ratio of 5 to 1 and fox hunting by 4 to 1. The "block vote" actually defeated the anti fox-hunting move.

Mr Nunneley believes that to reveal voting details would undermine the principle of a secret ballot and play into the hands of minorities who feel more strongly about single issues than the overall welfare of the trust. "It is part of our responsibility as trustees to ensure that vocal minorities do not form the tail that swings the dog."

Rodney Legg, the only regular dissident on the council, argues that postal ballots for everything would democratise the council and defeat single-issue fanatics. "Some people are conscious they are there because of the chairman and that's most unhealthy," Mr Legg said.

Since 1990, 41 out of 43 retiring council members seeking re-election were reappointed. One of the two rejected had championed the anti-hunt cause.

But the would-be reformers are not optimistic. As one put it: "We groundlings are really asking the aristocrats to organise their own tumbrils."



Vision of Englishness: Bodiam Castle in East Sussex, one of hundreds of properties preserved by the National Trust Photograph: Oliver Benn/National Trust Photographic Library

***The Goose Girl*: Not the genuine article**

Famous work of art exposed as a fake

Alan Murdoch
Dublin

Ireland's National Gallery yesterday ended years of controversy by confirming that one of its most famous paintings, *The Goose Girl*, was not after all the work of the Irish artist William Leech but is by a lesser-known English painter.

The statement confirms claims which were reported in *The Independent* last year that the picture, currently in the gallery's Leech exhibition, was almost certainly by a Sheffield-born painter and close contemporary, Stanley Royle (1888-1961).

Both the girl featured in it and the sun-dappled woodland setting exactly matched those in an almost-identical work by Royle, *Spring Morning Among the Bluebells*.

The National Gallery said *The Goose Girl* had been examined with a binocular microscope and this had shown clearly for the first time the letters "...ley" and "...le" from a Christian name and a surname, indicating Stanley Royle's signature.

Uncertainty about the work led to years of fierce arguments between art experts in Ireland and Britain, mostly conducted in the columns and letters pages of national newspapers. Among those convinced from an early stage that the attribution was incorrect was the art historian Dominic Milmo-Penny who pointed out that it appeared to belong to a whole series of Royle works with strong similarities to *The Goose Girl*.

But confusion over the picture's origins had been fuelled by the fact that it was in Leech's possession and used to hang in his studio.

It was still attributed to him at the time it was purchased by the Irish National Gallery in 1970. *The Goose Girl* is now thought to have been painted outside Sheffield around 1921, and not in Brittany as had first been thought. It had been thought to have been from a school of Irish Impressionists including Leech (1881-1968) and Roderick O'Connor who painted in France in the late 19th century.

The dispute reached a climax last year when Christie's in London held a sale of modern British and continental paintings, with Royle's *Spring Morning Among the Bluebells* reproduced in colour on the catalogue cover.

This brought home to many Irish observers for the first time the uncanny similarity. "'Spring Morning' appears to be a continuation of *The Goose Girl*, they are so similar," a Dublin art critic observed when the catalogue arrived in the post.

Raymond Keaveney, the Irish National Gallery's director, said the question of he authorship "has now been conclusively resolved". He said the gallery had always intended that the current Leech exhibition "would act as a catalyst to clarify Leech's relationship to this painting".

international

No sleep 'til Tuesday for Clinton and Dole

THE US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 96

Rupert Cornwell
Santa Barbara, California

Viva el Presidente: Bill Clinton acclaimed in Las Vegas, as polls confirm his lead over Bob Dole is virtually unassailable
Photograph: Reuters

Bill Clinton and Bob Dole hurled themselves into a campaign finale of non-stop travel until Tuesday's vote – the President with the goal of securing re-election with an outright majority of the popular vote and helping return a Democratic Congress, his Republican challenger in the hope of stirring moral outrage enough to cause the greatest upset in US political history.

Mr Dole's 96-hour marathon started in the vital Mid-western swing state of Ohio yesterday, with a last-ditch bid to turn the character issue against his opponent. Almost simultaneously, Mr Clinton was due to set out proposals for bipartisan campaign finance reform at a speech here, before heading east to Texas, the third largest electoral prize, which the Democrats hope to capture for the first time in 20 years.

A president should set "the highest standards for everyone, this is not a game", Mr Dole declared in Columbus, flanked by the former Republican presidents George Bush and Gerald Ford. He lashed out at scandals which have buffeted the White House throughout the Clinton administration.

"It's going to be a referendum now ... It smells, It stinks, these people are shameless," he said of the White House and the dubious Democratic fund-raising practices that have been making headlines here for weeks. "Do the American people care about ethical scandals?" Unfortunately for him, despite a smattering of hecklers and protesters outside Mr Clinton's hotel at this resort, the answer alas, was almost certainly, not enough.

In many ways the battle for California, whose 54 electoral votes are a key target of both parties, has been the story of this campaign. Here and all across the West this week, Mr Clinton has been delivering not so much a political speech as a warm, fuzzy sermon, of hope, harmony and happiness. He makes a point of raising such non-partisan and 21st-century topics as supercomputers and advanced neurological research, all in the calculation he can glide above the fray to overwhelming victory on 5 November.

Even yesterday, he was not expected to address specifically the allegations that his party had trawled illegally for hundreds of thousands of dollars in contributions from East Asian business interests, appealing instead for a bipartisan effort to solve a problem that has bedevilled America even before the 1974 Watergate scandal.

Everywhere, however, the crowds have been fizzing and large – as many as 25,000 at an Arizona stop, and 5,000 happy supporters at a Hallowe'en evening rally in a square on the Oakland waterfront, across the bay from San Francisco. By contrast Dole events here have been held before enthusiastic but selected audiences in Republican strongholds, of little avail in narrowing a Clinton lead of between 15 and 20 points.

Nor is his railing over campaign finance likely to change matters. Despite the latest Republican tirades, Americans generally believe that both parties are at fault. If anything the reaction could be disgust at the entire political process which could mainly serve only to depress turnout next Tuesday.

Mr Clinton is alive to those fears. Increasingly, he is pitching for his party's congressional candidates, appealing everywhere for a high turn-out to return control of Capitol Hill to the Democrats. But he has a personal ambition too, of winning 51 per cent or more of the popular vote in what is the last major election of his career, and banishing the image of the 43 per cent "minority President" elected in 1992.

Despite Mr Dole's fierce language, yesterday again brought no sign of the 11th-hour miracle that alone can save him. A Reuters poll shows Mr Clinton's lead at a smaller but still forbidding eight points; CNN/*USA Today* however puts the margin at double that. All though show an advance by the Reform Party candidate Ross Perot, who has long hammered away at the campaign finance issue. "I'm not going to give up, we're going to to win," he insisted. "The last time I fought around the clock for my country was in Italy," declared Bob Dole the war hero of 1945. "It was worth it then and it's worth it now."

Bob Dole profile, page 21

Romanian rulers face voters' anger

Adrian Bridge
Central Europe Correspondent

Ion Iliescu, the former Communist who has ruled Romania since the overthrow of the hated Nicolae Ceausescu, faces a battle for his political survival in presidential and parliamentary elections tomorrow which could mark the first real shift of power in Romania since 1989.

In a final frenzied week of campaigning, Mr Iliescu has appealed to voters to see him as the "father of the nation" and the guarantor of stability and the goals of the December 1989 revolution.

But in many towns he has been jeered by crowds angry about the slow pace of economic reform and widespread poverty and corruption.

Almost seven years after the toppling of Ceausescu, the average monthly wage in Romania is still under $100 (£66). The country lags far behind Poland and Hungary. For many, liberation from Communism and the coming of the free market have brought hardship, and anger is rising towards those deemed responsible.

In the presidential contest, opinion polls predict that Mr Iliescu may just emerge slightly ahead of his two main rivals: Emil Constantinescu, an academic who heads the opposition Democratic Convention (CDR) and Petre Roman, a former prime minister with whom the President once worked in tandem. The second-round run-off is planned to take place in two weeks' time.

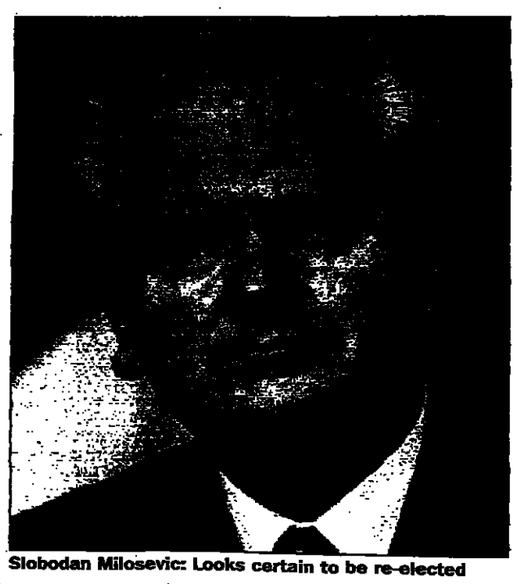
The parallel parliamentary poll is almost certain to see a defeat for Mr Iliescu's Party of Social Democracy (PDSR), the reformist successor to Ceausescu's Communist Party.

"The Romanian political establishment faces a major democratic test on Sunday – a transfer of power," declared the independent *Adevarul* paper in a recent editorial. "Romania is the only East European country where there has been no real transfer of power since 1989."

Mr Iliescu, who emerged from the shadows of the Communist Party to mastermind the coup against Ceausescu, acknowledges that if he scrapes home in the presidential poll he may have to work with a hostile parliament. But after the bitterness of the election campaign, a French-style system of cohabitation would prove a tough challenge.

Serb voters resigned to the Devil they know

Tony Barber
Europe Editor



Slobodan Milosevic: Looks certain to be re-elected

Yugoslavia, the rump state comprising Serbia and Montenegro, holds parliamentary elections tomorrow that seem likely to produce a victory for the leftist coalition of Serbia's President, Slobodan Milosevic.

"The united forces of peace and development. . . will celebrate an historical victory over hatred, violence and conservatism," Mr Milosevic told a 6,000-strong crowd in Belgrade last Thursday.

In some ways, it seems astonishing that Mr Milosevic should retain the support of the Serbian electorate, given that he has presided over a period of economic collapse as well as nationalist wars in Croatia and Bosnia which failed to achieve the goal of pan-Serb unification that he proclaimed in 1991. However, Mr Milosevic benefits from the fact that his political opponents are internally divided, harassed by the state, and apparently unable to alter the deferential attitudes of Serbian voters towards authority.

The Serbian opposition has put together an electoral coalition, known as Zajedno (Together), which combines political forces from the liberal centre and independent trade unions to the nationalist right. However, in the unlikely event of victory, few political commentators expect the coalition to stick together.

The odds against the opposition are enormous. State television and radio, the main source of political news for Serbs, have lavished praise on Mr Milosevic for contributing to the 1995 Dayton peace settlement in Bosnia, and have entirely ignored the fact that he stoked the Croatian and Bosnian wars in the first place.

Opposition campaigners have drawn fairly large crowds at electoral rallies in Serbia and Montenegro where they have denounced Mr Milosevic's nine-year period in office.

However, few if any of these rallies have received coverage on state television.

The main opposition leader, Vuk Draskovic, this week accused Mr Milosevic and his hardline Marxist wife, Mirjana Markovic, of trying to win re-election by resurrecting the World War Two divisions between Serbian royalists and anti-Nazi partisans. "They are calling for hatred, new trenches and new divisions. They want to step back to 1941. They don't want to move on to the 21st century," he said.

The best chance for the opposition may lie in the sheer desperation of Serbs, whose standards of living have plunged under Mr Milosevic. A Red Cross study estimated recently that almost three million people - or 28.9 per cent of the Serb and Montenegrin populations - lived in poverty.

In Belgrade and important industrial centres such as Kragujevac and Nis, workers have struck in the past three months to demand the prompt payment of wages. Average per capita income is the equivalent of about £85 a month, the worst level since the 1960s.

However, for many Serbian voters suspicious of change and conscious of the authoritarian pressures on their lives, Mr Milosevic remains the logical choice. His term as president of Serbia expires next year and it is expected he will create the post of Yugoslav president, enabling him to rule unchallenged for another seven years.

هكذا من الاصل

Mother grabs back children in a Lebanon schoolyard

American woman and charity workers in dramatic airport dash

Phil Davison
Miami

On Halloween three years ago, Nabela Henry's separated husband took her two children out to knock on their Florida neighbours' doors with the customary American "trick or treat". They ended up in Lebanon and she did not see them again until this week.

In a dramatic re-run of the book and movie *Not Without My Daughter*, Mrs Henry, a 26-year-old American, snatched the children from a Lebanese school this week and was able to spend Halloween with them in her Florida home. This time, she was not letting them out to trick, treat or otherwise.

Mrs Henry, an Arabic speaker of half-Egyptian, half-Lebanese extraction but born and brought up in the US, told *The Independent* how she had grabbed the children, aged seven and five, in the northern Lebanese city of Tripoli on Monday and talked her way through Syrian army checkpoints and out of Beirut airport.

She was helped by two members of a private charity group, based in Houston, Texas, called The American Association For Lost Children, which charges no fee and relies on donations. They took on her case after the US government failed to help.

Mrs Henry, from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, was in the midst of divorce proceedings from her Lebanese husband, Saad Fouad Abdo, a computer engineer, 38, three years ago. At Halloween, she had kept their informal agreement that he should see her son Ramzy, now seven, and daughter Nora, now five, on weekends and holidays.

"He said he would take them round to trick or treat and get them some sweets. They were so excited. I never imagined they would end up in Lebanon and I wouldn't see them for three years," she said. "I started off by calling the Fort Lauderdale police but they just said he's their father, he has the right. It was the following week that a mutual friend told me he had received a letter from my husband saying he was either going to take the kids or kill me. I said I wish he had just killed me."

Mrs Henry, since re-married to Michael Henry, an American, then contacted the State Department. "All they did was trace the kids to Tripoli and give me what they called a welfare check, saying they were well but there was nothing else the State Department could do."

Next, she tried a self-styled Lebanese private detective in New Jersey who took her £8,000 – she had pawned her £5,000 wedding ring – then disappeared. When she read about a little girl snatched from her father in Germany by the American Association for Lost Children and returned to her mother in the US, she contacted the Houston group. She, the group's founder Mark Miller, and a woman group member, Pat Moore, neither of the latter Arabic speakers, flew into Beirut from Larnaca, Cyprus, last Sunday night, spent the night in a hotel and took a taxi north to Tripoli.

"We had traced them to the Tripoli American school, a private school where kids learn English," Mrs Henry said. "It was just before eight in the morning and kids were milling in the schoolyard. I went up to the fence and asked kids if they had seen Ramzy or Nora.

"I found Ramzy in the yard, he gave me a huge hug, called me mommy and I put him in the taxi. The bell had rung so I went along the corridor, knocked on Class A and asked, in Arabic, for Nora. The teacher told me she was in Class D but when I went, she wasn't there.

"I went to the principal's office and said I had forgotten to give Nora her lunch money. The principal said she would pass it on, then I realised I had no Lebanese money. I had to go back to the taxi. By the time I got back to the office, the principal was obviously suspicious but I suddenly saw Nora in the corridor. I just grabbed her up in my arms, walked real fast, then ran to the cab and we sped south towards Jounieh [north of Beirut]. Syrian soldiers kept stopping us. Mark and Pat kept quiet, I did the talking."

They had planned to take a ferry from Jounieh to Cyprus but found they had missed it so drove on to Beirut airport.

"We tried to get the first plane to anywhere, which aroused suspicions. Mark managed to get tickets to Paris but the Lebanese immigration officials detained me and the kids. I had got American passports for the kids in the States but obviously there were no stamps on them. I said the authorities in Cyprus and Beirut must have forgot to stamp them.

"Then they asked why I had come in for one night and was leaving so soon. I said Beirut had been more expensive than I'd expected. I'd spent all my money . . . They finally believed me, said the immigration officials on duty the night before would be reprimanded for forgetting to stamp the kids' passports and let me go. It was about 1pm when we boarded the plane. I was a nervous wreck, then the pilot announced there would be a delay. I thought my husband must have shown up and that they'd come and get me. But we finally took off. I cried, Mark cried, Pat cried. The kids said don't cry any more, mommy, why are you crying? I said we're going home."

Finally arriving in New York on Tuesday, Mrs Henry was questioned by immigration whose files showed that she had listed her children as missing. After calls to Fort Lauderdale police, she was allowed to fly on to Miami and a tearful reunion with relatives. Legally, US authorities say the children are hers since they have no official knowledge that she "kidnapped" them in Lebanon. But if her husband gets them back to Lebanon, there's nothing the US can do. The children seemed to have re-adapted quickly to Florida, gazing at the Disney Channel and video games and telling their mother they never wanted to go back to Lebanon. But Mrs Henry fears her husband may return. "He may try again. I'll always be looking over my shoulder," she said.

Nabela Henry (centre) arrives at Miami airport this week with her son Ramzy (left) and her daughter Nora, after bringing them back from Tripoli, where they were taken by their Lebanese father three years ago
Photograph: Miami Herald

Rival Kurds sign peace accord

Hopes rise that war has ended, though old mistrusts persist in dividing rivals

Patrick Cockburn

War is over: Fighters belonging to the Kurdistan Democratic Party in northern Iraq Photograph: Reuters

After two months of fighting, rival Kurdish parties have signed a peace accord which brings an end to the latest phase in the civil war in Kurdistan. The agreement, mediated by the US, Britain and Turkey at a two-day meeting in Ankara, commits both sides not to seek support from outside powers.

The war has seen rapidly changing fortunes on the battlefield. The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan led by Jalal al-Talabani first attacked, allegedly with Iranian support, on 17 August. Facing defeat the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Massoud Barzani allied itself with Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi leader, and drove Mr Talabani out of most of Kurdistan, only to see him, again with Iranian support, regain most of his losses in a counter-offensive.

"This is a good blueprint for re-establishing the Kurdish regional government in northern Iraq," said Robert Pelletreau, the US Assistant Secretary of State at the end of the meeting. A blueprint is what it is likely to remain since the divisions between the two sides are too deep for a joint administration to be formed.

According to the agreement Kurdistan will be divided along the battlelines as they were on 23 October, prisoners will be released and neither side is to disrupt the distribution of humanitarian aid. The accord is to be monitored by a group including members of the Assyrian and Turcoman minorities in northern Iraq. The involvement of the Turcomans shows greater Turkish influence, while the US has abandoned the Iraqi National Congress (INC), an Iraqi resistance movement partly financed by the CIA. In the past the US has proposed the INC as a ceasefire monitor.

Despite the declarations by the PUK and KDP that they will not rely on outside powers, the civil war over the last two months has sharply increased the influence of Baghdad and Tehran in Iraqi Kurdistan. "Both parties have fallen further into the hands of Iraq and Iran," says Laith Kubba, an Iraqi opposition intellectual. "First Barzani won his victory because of the support of Saddam and then the Iranians put Talabani back in business."

The Kurdish civil war, which began in 1994, has seriously damaged aspirations for Kurdish self-determination which had soared in the wake of the Kurdish uprising at the end of the Gulf war. "Unfortunately in defeat the Kurds do not compromise but look for an outside supporter," says Kamran Karadaghi, a Kurdish journalist.

The accord may open the way for the implementation of the oil-for-food deal, to be worth $2bn every six months, which was agreed between Iraq and the UN in May. This could prove to be vital for the many Kurds who had heard rumours of imminent UN food aid in the sowing season, and therefore delayed planting crops this year.

Iraq has criticised the agreement. *Al-Iraq* newspaper said yesterday: "The peace imposed by America [in northern Iraq] is fragile and shaky because it is implemented in order to achieve American interests." Nevertheless Saddam Hussein has been able to prove that he still has a potent army by his brief intervention on 31 August when his tanks helped the KDP take the Kurdish capital Arbil. The successful counter-offensive by the PUK, apparently with heavy Iranian support, has made Mr Barzani more reliant on Baghdad than if he had won an outright victory.

The swift reconquest of his old base in Sulaimaniyah province by Mr Talabani shows that he has popular support among its 1.2 million people. But having lost the Kurdish capital Arbil his PUK party will be more than ever reliant on Iran. The extent of this reliance was hinted at in letters that had passed between the two parties, and that were found by the KDP in September.

In the overall balance sheet in this latest round of the civil war Iraq and Iran have both strengthened their positions. The US has lost a little credibility by failing to stop Saddam Hussein using his tanks. The biggest losers are the Kurds themselves whose divisions have prevented them establishing a Kurdish power, let alone an independent state, in the mountains of north-eastern Iraq.

Phone gossips caught by the Net

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

Americans, and especially Californians, who feel that it's good to talk on the telephone are finding it harder to get through, because of the growing numbers who reckon it's better to surf.

The explosive growth of the Internet, which has doubled in size in the past year, and today has more than seven times as many computers connected to it than in 1993, is leading to blocked local telephone exchanges in parts of the US.

Calls to access the Internet are typically much longer than voice calls – an average of 20 minutes rather than three, though some Internet sessions can last hours. And the rapid growth in Internet use has overwhelmed the ability of the local telephone companies to upgrade exchange capacity.

The result is engaged signals or long silences before the dial tone is available, a phenomenon which technicians call "contention". Bellcore, the research arm of the US local telephone companies, says that the growth of Internet use "poses an immediate threat to the capacity of the public telephone network".

In California, home to Los Angeles, San Francisco and the high concentration of high-tech industries in the area south of San Francisco known as Silicon Valley, Pacific Bell, the local telephone company, has found that one in 10 "Internet" calls lasts six hours or more. As a result, 1 per cent of callers in California face a delay in getting a line; but at times this year the figure has hit 16 per cent.

However, the problem is unlikely to be repeated in Europe. A spokesman for BT said: "We're not seeing anything like this at the moment. And it's worth noting that the 'backbone' telephone network in the US isn't overloaded. It's all at the local level." The problem in California was the result of "a very high concentration of Internet usage in a small area with a network that was designed for voice", he added.

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Chirac embroiled in homes scandal

Mary Dejevsky
Paris

The tangled scandal of Paris council housing has taken on a new, bitter dimension with the revelation that some "élite" flats leased out by the council originally belonged to Jews who were deported during the Nazi occupation, and which were never returned to them.

A small charge of dynamite in the revelations, which was omitted by the French press when it reported the evidence of Jewish ownership, is that the tenant of one such flat is none other than the brother-in-law of the French President, Jacques Chirac.

The allegations are made in a book which has just been published, and which details the history of what is known as the city's "Domaine Privé". This is the disparate collection of more than 300 buildings, including at least 1,300 flats – the number may be twice or three times higher – which are owned and maintained by the council and let at far below market rents to hand-picked members of the political and cultural élite.

The existence of the "domaine", which was long shrouded in secrecy, periodically came to the attention of the city auditors in post-war years – only to be swept deftly under the carpet again, once the strength of vested interests became clear.

But last year, the Prime Minister, Alain Juppé, who had managed to lodge himself and four members of his family in such flats while head of the Paris city council's accounts department, was forced to choose between prosecution and moving out. When the extent of the property holdings of the mayor, Jean Tiberi, became known shortly afterwards - both his adult children were lodged at cut-price rents, while letting out a total of four flats they owned at market rents - the game seemed to be almost up.

Mr Tiberi, a newly re-elected mayor with a smaller majority than his predecessor, Mr Chirac, announced a full audit of the "domaine privé" and promised the better-quality flats would be sold on the open market when they were vacated, or the leases came up for renewal. The rest would be distributed to those on the council waiting list. City councillors were warned that if they had awarded themselves flats from this stock, they should recall the threat to prosecute Mr Juppé.

A few vacant flats have been sold. Otherwise, the inquiry is proceeding slowly. Now, as a result of the revelations made by the journalist, Brigitte Vital-Durand, in her book, further sales have been frozen, pending research into the history of the flats concerned. The investigations are being backed by Jewish campaigners, including Serge and Beate Klarsfeld.

On the basis of city archives and witness testimony, Ms Vital-Durand establishes that 150 flats concentrated in the southern Marais district of central Paris were obtained by the council during and immediately after the war. The council's intention, she says, was to create a district, close to the town hall, into which the city administration could spread and where the élite could be housed.

She traces the history of individual streets and houses, showing how the council used emergency slum-clearance measures decreed by the Vichy government to take over tracts of housing in the largely Jewish district of the southern Marais, on grounds of "sanitation". The deportations of 1943-3 helped to clear many of the owners and tenants who remained. Nowadays, the author says, this would be called "ethnic cleansing".

The vast majority of the buildings taken over by the council were never returned. Many of the original owners and their families died in the concentration camps. Some of the buildings were demolished. But of the few who tried to reclaim them, even fewer were successful.

A discreet *leitmotif* of Ms Vital-Durand's book is the juxtaposition of two families. One is the Zajdners, who died at Auschwitz, and whose daughter, Sarah, persuaded Mr Chirac, during last year's presidential election campaign, to allow her to place a memorial plaque in a garden, now owned by the council, which is all that is left of their family house at 4, Rue Eginhard. The other family are the Courcels, Chaudron de Courcel to be precise, headed by the brother of Mr Chirac's wife, Bernadette. They live next door, at number 6.

On All Saints' Day, Belgians remember children

Mourners covering the graves yesterday of the four young girls murdered by a child-sex ring

Charleroi (Reuter) – Mourners covered the graves of four young girl victims of a Belgian paedophile ring with thousands of chrysanthemums yesterday to mark All Saints' Day, a national holiday in most Catholic countries.

Hundred of couples, holding hands with their young children and many shedding tears, visited the graveyards where eight-year-old Julie Lejeune and Melissa Russo, and Ae Marchal, 17, and Eefje Lambrecks, 19, were buried.

They also stood before the houses owned by Marc Dutroux, the man alleged to have run the paedophile ring which kidnapped and murdered them.

The child-murder and sex scandal has rocked Belgium since the girls' bodies were discovered over the summer, triggering nation-wide strikes and demonstrations across the country.

Meanwhile, in Croatia, Croat refugees from Eastern Slavonia made their first visit in years to the Serb-held enclave to commemorate their dead and catch a glimpse of their homes. Some 40 buses carrying more than 2,000 refugees crossed to Serb-held territory escorted by the UN civil police, and joint Croat-Serb police patrols. Men and women, some dressed in black and carrying flowers, were allowed a one-hour visit to 30 grave sites scattered all over Eastern Slavonia.

A pay rise for the Gurkhas as they leave Hong Kong - and their families - behind

Leaving town: The band of the 1st battalion Gurkha Rifles band parade during the Beating Retreat ceremony yesterday Photograph:Reuter/SCMP – Mark Raitson

Stephen Vines
Hong Kong

Everything about the Gurkhas' presence in Hong Kong is slightly incongruous, so it was not surprising that last night's departure ceremony should add to the oddness.

After 48 years' service here, the Nepalese soldiers have become victims of cuts and the reversion of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty, which will ensure that their soon-to-be-renovated barracks are handed to the incoming People's Liberation Army garrison.

As for the incongruity, it was everywhere, starting on the Polo Field, where the ceremony was held. The field is, in fact, a football pitch. The Malaya Lines, where the Gurkhas are based, have no connection with Malaya or modern Malaysia, and the 700 Gurkhas who will be leaving appear to be doing so without regret. They have never really been part of the colony, nor integrated into the rest of the British garrison.

Yet they have developed a taste for things British, ranging, from a liking for spam sandwiches to an affection for Scottish melodies. Thus it was that the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas belted out "Scotland the Brave" and "The Skye Boat Song" into the warm night air. A traditional dance using the kukri knife, which has been deployed for less benign purposes, was also part of the proceedings, as was the lowering of the Union and Royal Gurkha Rifles flags while the band played "Sunset".

"A time of parting is a time of sadness, especially when long years of service have developed friendship and respect," said Governor Chris Patten, who pointed out that the Gurkhas had helped protect Hong Kong's enterprise and investment. In practice this largely meant patrolling the border to prevent a flood of illegal immigrants from mainland China.

The job is neither pleasant nor rewarding, but Gurkhas are not famous for complaining. As they prepare to pack, they are showing no signs of complaining about the move which will leave 71 men redundant and take 600 to a new posting with 5 Airborne Brigade in Britain.

Those going to Britain are happy they will be getting a rise. In Hong Kong the Gurkhas were always paid significantly less than British soldiers in the garrison. The bad news is that they will not be allowed to travel with their families. It seems the Army does not mind Gurkhas having something approaching a normal family life as long as they do not do so on British soil.

The Gurkhas, in white shirts and regimental ties, watched last night's ceremony with evident enjoyment. They were officially off duty, and, like the other military guests, not in uniform. However, the Gurkhas never really seem to be off duty – discipline lingers at all times.

This may explain why there is a vogue in Hong Kong for employing retired Gurkhas as security guards. They are viewed as far more disciplined and alert than the Chinese. Whether the incoming regime will tolerate their presence is not known.

The Gurkhas will be replaced by the 1st Battalion, The Staffordshire Regiment, which marks a piece of military coming full circle. The regiment was in the colony in 1842, the year China was forced to sign the Treaty of Nanking, ceding Hong Kong island to the British in perpetuity. On 30 June next year they will provide the military presence at the ceremony marking the end of British rule.

significant shorts

Bavaria ban on church 'was wrong'

The head of Germany's parliamentary interior affairs committee said Bavaria was wrong to exclude Church of Scientology members from the civil service. It would be more efficient to do a tax audit of the organisation in Germany, Willfried Penner, of the opposition Social Democrats, said. There could be "members ... who have a firm conviction without being caught up in anything criminal or offensive". Bavaria is the first of Germany's 16 regional states to impose restrictions on public-sector employment of Scientology members. *Reuter – Bonn*

China expels HK activists

China has told two Hong Kong democracy activists, Wong Chung-ki and Chui Pak-tai, to leave after they tried to petition officials over the future of the colony. Hong Kong sources said the two had been trying to petition officials over what they called undemocratic methods used to select a chief executive to run the colony after it reverts to Peking next year. *Reuter – Peking*

Defence boss slurs his lines

President Alexander Lukashenko of Belarus dismissed his Defence Minister for turning up drunk at a ceremony. Leonid Maltsev had earlier arrived with Mr Lukashenko to mark the 75th anniversary of a medical institute in Minsk. "The reason for his sacking was the general's behaviour, who was drunk at the moment when he had to deliver an opening speech at the celebrations," the Russian Interfax agency said. *Reuter – Minsk*

Saudis claim they hold key bomb suspect

Saudi officials are holding a suspect they believe drove the explosives-laden truck that destroyed part of a housing complex in Dhahran in June, killing 19 Americans. Sources quoted by the *Washington Post* said he is among 40 Saudis being held because officials believe they were involved in the bombing. *AP – Washington*

Settler faces death charge

Israeli authorities charged a Jewish settler, Nahum Kurman, with manslaughter over the death of an 11-year-old Palestinian, saying he beat the boy on the head with a pistol butt. Hilmi Shousha died on Monday, a day after Arab witnesses said Mr Kurman beat him to death during a stoning incident. *Reuter – Jerusalem*

Burma squares up to the EU

Burma was considering reciprocal sanctions against the European Union after it limited contacts with Burmese officials this week because of Rangoon's repressive policies. The Foreign Minister, Ohn Gyaw, said: "We are saying 'Leave us alone; it is our internal affairs'."

US joins row over medal

The US deplored the award of a gold medal to Nigeria's military ruler, Sani Abacha, by the head of UN agency, the World Intellectual Property Organization, despite condemnation of the country by two other UN bodies for its poor human-rights record. *AP – Geneva*

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Farewell to misery of poison gas

An image that may have been banished: John Singer Sargent's *Gassed*, showing the aftermath of an attack in the First World War. The new treaty prohibits the use of chemical weapons Impenal War Museum

'Dulce et Decorum Est' by Wildred Owen*

Ban takes effect in six months

Christopher Bellamy
Defence Correspondent

The most hated and despised weapons ever devised will be banned by international agreement next year. The last hurdle to a global, permanent ban on chemical weapons – poison gas and droplets which choke, poison blood or destroy the nervous system – has been passed with Hungary ratifying the international Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). It will come into force on 29 April, after 28 years of negotiations.

Last night politicians, diplomats and arms control experts expressed delight. "This means CWC will definitely enter into force in six months' time," said David Davis, minister for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. "This is a milestone in international arms control efforts. The CWC is the first multilateral treaty to impose a complete ban on an entire class of weapons and a verification regime to monitor compliance."

Some 160 nations have signed the convention. Britain was the 51st, on 13 May this year. With Hungary, it has been ratified by 65, the number necessary to bring it into force.

The US and Russia, the only nations that have admitted still possessing chemical weapons, have not ratified the convention but as signatories they will be bound by it and will have to destroy all their remaining chemical weapons stocks. A review conference is to be held within 30 days of the convention coming into force and if the US and Russia want to attend they will have to have ratified it.

Iraq, which has made most use of chemical weapons in recent times, has not signed the convention but is regarded as a "special case", subject to surveillance by the UN Special Commission on Iraq.

The ban binds signatories to destroy production facilities and never to develop, produce, acquire or stockpile chemical weapons or transfer them to anyone, never to use chemical weapons and never to assist or encourage anyone to engage in any other activity prohibited by the convention, including the use of riot-control gases in warfare. Industrial, agricultural and pharmaceutical research, and research designed to enhance protection against chemical weapons, is still allowed.

Following their use in the First World War, the use of chemical weapons was banned by the 1925 Geneva Protocol. However, the right to use chemical weapons in retaliation was retained by many states, and the protocol did not stop the Italians using them in Abyssinia. Chemical weapons underwent further development in the Thirties, with Germany developing nerve gas. The threat remained during the Second World War and the Cold War. Negotiations on a treaty began in 1968 but progress was made only after a US-USSR agreement in 1990. This committed both to reducing their stocks to 5,000 tons by 2002. The remainder will now be destroyed.

"There isn't a political problem with that but the disposal of these substances will be expensive," said Anil Wahwa, spokesman for the Preparatory Commission of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in the Hague, set up under the convention.

A OPCW will now be set up, with a member from each of the signatory states, and an executive council of 41.

Victim of Iraq's nerve gas attack on Halabja in 1988

History of terror weapons

The United States and Russia are the only countries that admit possessing substantial stocks of chemical weapons, but, as signatories to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), they will now be obliged to destroy them, along with any large-scale production facilities, **writes Christopher Bellamy.**

The only exceptions are research establishments such as Britain's Chemical Defence Establishment at Porton Down in Wiltshire, producing small quantities of chemicals designed to permit experiments relating to defensive measures. Under the CWC, each state may keep one ton of the most lethal agents for such purposes.

The nations which still cause concern – none of which have signed the convention - are Iraq, Libya and Iran. Iraq is subject to a special United Nations regime and international observers are therefore less concerned about it than about Libya, where there have been allegations that chemical weapons are being manufactured at Tarhuna, south-east of Tripoli. There has also been concern about a plant at Rabta. Libya denied the latter, saying the $20m (£13m) plant produced pharmaceuticals

Iran has allegedly produced mustard gas, chlorine, phosgene and hydrogen cyanide and is believed to be able to produce nerve gases such as sarin.

Chemical weapons are relatively easy to make. There are four main categories. The first, initially used in 1915, are simple "choking" agents - chlorine and phosgene. Next came "blister" agents - dichlorethyl sulphide, or mustard gas, first used in 1916. Besides being able to penetrate clothing, these agents can also be very persistent, remaining in the ground for decades after their release. Then came "nerve" agents, invented by the Germans in the Thirties but quickly adopted by the Soviet Union and the US, which give rise to involuntary nerve impulses, causing convulsions and death.

The fourth type are "blood" agents such as hydrogen cyanide, which are lethal but disperse very quickly. There are also toxins, which are of biological origin but act as poisons.

Iraq's use of chemical weapons has been the most blatant in recent years. In 1988, during the Iran-Iraq war, the Iraqis used it against the Kurds at Halabja, killing an estimated 5,000 people. After the Gulf war, the Allies denied that the Iraqis had made any use of their chemical stocks, but has emerged since that there were several large releases.

obituaries / gazette

J. R. Jayawardene

When distinguished politicians die at a very great age it is often said that their lives spanned eras that seem as distant in time as in spirit. Of no politician can this observation be more appropriate than Junius Richard Jayawardene, who began his career at a time when Sri Lanka, then Ceylon, was often referred to as the "Switzerland of the East", and finished it when that same island had become a byword for terror, abuse of human rights and many other things distinctly undemocratic. The critical question that will face his biographer is to assess to what extent, if any, did Jayawardene (always known as JR) contribute to the national tragedy that forms the backdrop to his life.

He was born in 1906, one of 11 children in a family at the very heart of the Ceylonese Anglophile elite. The Jayawardenes had emerged under the Dutch, done well under the British and by the turn of the century had become very powerful indeed. His father, E.R. Jayawardene, was appointed Chief Justice in 1924, and his uncle, D.R. Wijewardene, owned the most powerful newspaper publishing group in Colombo.

He was successful at school, but did not (since family finances were always a problem) leave the island to attend a foreign university. This was a source of considerable personal regret though in the long term may have been to his advantage. Certainly Jayawardene's world view would always be less Anglocentric, more internationalist, than that of his Oxford-educated contemporaries. At a time when most Ceylonese were still preoccupied with their country's relations with Europe, he perceived that its future lay with Asia. In 1946, as Ceylonese delegate to the Peace Conference in San Francisco, he pleaded for fair play for the defeated Japanese, something that country never forgot and would generously reward in later years. He was co-author of the 1950 Colombo Plan for Asian Economic Development after the Second World War.

Jayawardene studied at Colombo Law School, was called to the Bar and by his mid-thirties had established himself in his profession, married a great heiress, and acquired a reputation as one of the most intelligent, cultivated, articulate and ambitious young men of his generation. It is also said that he was amongst the most arrogant and least popular.

There was ample scope for jealousy. Political life was dominated by his unashamedly nepotistic cousins by marriage, the Senanayakes, who groomed him for office. In his politics he was accused of hypocrisy and opportunism – professing Marxism while leading the life of a plutocrat, praising secularism and pluralism while promoting policies undisguisedly chauvinistic. While still a young man he publicly suggested the adoption by the United National Party of a "Sinhala only" language policy. This was eventually put into law by his opponent and most formidable contemporary S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, and would prove to be utterly disastrous.

Like Bandaranaike, Jayawardene went to some pains to throw off the Western trappings in which he had been steeped. He converted to Buddhism, acquired competent Sinhala and adopted an improvised "national dress". Inevitably these changes were criticised as insincere, though he claimed to be a convinced Buddhist.

They were also essential. Jayawardene realised before many others that in a democracy (which Ceylon became in 1931) the elite could no longer afford to be alienated from the majority in religion, manners, language and dress.

His father had believed that the British Empire would last a thousand years. Jayawardene, like the rest of his generation, did not. When independence came in 1947, he was well-positioned to take office. He was offered and accepted the Finance Ministry. In later years this would be one of the least envied jobs in the cabinet, but in the honeymoon period immediately post-independence the island's finances were reasonably healthy. Ceylon had become well-off in the war, and its commodities were valuable. In his first budget speech he was able to announce to Parliament that Ceylon was the richest nation per capita in Asia after Japan, a statement now somewhat painful to recall. His policies were prudent, competent and generally admired.

The honeymoon ended in 1953, when faced with an alarming budget crisis, he attempted to cut the rice subsidy. The result was deep unpopularity from which he was not to recover for a very long time. He lost his seat in 1956 and remained out of Parliament until 1960.

This in effect ended the first phase of Jayawardene's political career. There followed a long gap until 1977 when, aged 71, he was elected Prime Minister by a landslide. The intervening period, dominated by the Bandaranaike family, was one of rapid economic decline and increasing social confusion. For all sorts of reasons, some unavoidable – the population boom, for instance, and declining terms of trade – but many others artificially created, the island found itself in increasingly difficult circumstances and was left out of the general rise to prosperity that took place in other Asian countries.


Jayawardene: radical programme of political and economic change

Jayawardene's own politics at this time drifted steadily to the right. He became convinced that the sub-Marxist, anti-Western stance of Sri Lankan government since 1956 had contributed to its economic failure. He believed, correctly, that the success of Ceylon under colonial rule had had much to do with its combination of foreign capital and expertise with local resources, and endeavoured to create the same conditions.

In office he immediately set about a radical programme of political and economic change. Diplomatically he re-aligned Sri Lanka with the West, seeking at the same time Western co-operation in the development of the Sri Lankan economy, along the lines of successful newly industrialised countries of South East Asia.

At first things seemed to go very well indeed. He rewrote the constitution to adopt a French-type presidential system. Economic initiatives such as the creation of the Free Trade Zone brought in a good deal of foreign investment. Vast amounts of aid were lined up for the Mahaweli damming and irrigation scheme. The *Economist* magazine in 1981 praised his adroit management and talked of the island's "economic miracle". The Queen, visiting in 1982, spoke in the same vein. There was talk of Sri Lanka joining the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

It was not long afterwards that things began to go very wrong indeed on all fronts. Rapid spending, some of it on unnecessary prestige projects, caused inflation which in turn brought social unrest. Further constitutional amendments marginalised the legitimate opposition and concentrated an unhealthy degree of power in his own hands.

Improvidence and mild megalomania, however, were not as serious as Jayawardene's failure to handle in its early stages the grievances of the island's minority community, the Tamils. The history of the Tamil uprising is very complex indeed. While there was never the possibility of a simple solution, even the most sympathetic observer of Sri Lankan affairs must come to the conclusion that his handling of the problem was far from adroit.

From the beginning Jayawardene seemed not to realise the seriousness of Tamil grievances, and lost the chance to negotiate with the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) MPs when he clumsily obliged them to resign from Parliament in 1981. It might be argued that from July 1983, when communal violence began in earnest, there was nothing to be done to save the situation. It is doubtful, however, whether any strategy could have been more disastrous than that which he chose to pursue. Jayawardene opted for a military solution, but did so without the crucial co-operation of India, and without realising the Tamils' military and diplomatic strength. India, by arming the rebels and offering them safe haven, rendered the military objectives ludicrous.

Internationally Tamil pressure-groups blackened the name of Jayawardene and his government, which saw its aid receipts drop and its expenses rise. The violence went from bad to worse. Decisions were in effect removed from Jayawardene's hands in 1987 by Rajiv Gandhi, who forced on him the Indo-Lankan Accord and despatched a peace-keeping force to control the situation.

If internationally this was humiliating, domestically it was disastrous. Jayawardene, for long hated by the Tamils, now became public enemy number one of the Sinhalese. He narrowly survived an assassination attempt in August 1987.

In the JVP (People's Liberation Front) uprising of 1988-89 it was clear that to ordinary rural Sinhalese whom Jayawardene had in the past championed, he was an object of profound, irrational hatred. He is likely to remain so for many years. During his last year in office he was obliged to sign emergency regulations which granted the army and police powers that in all but name amounted to martial law. These were much abused.

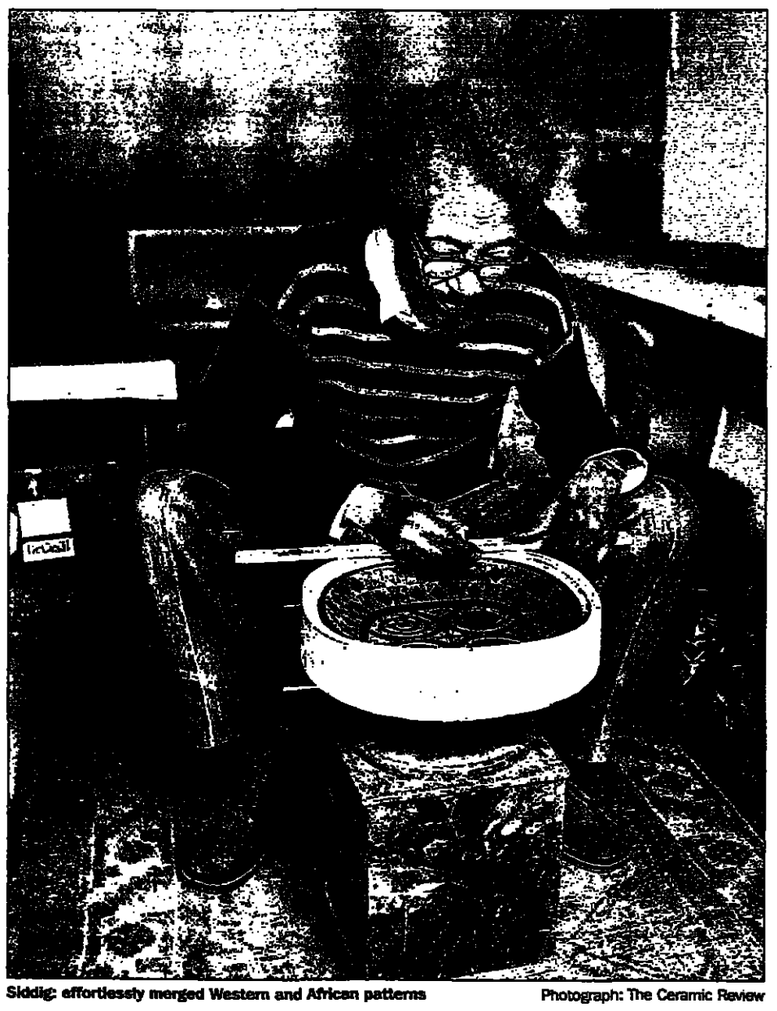
Anyone who called at Braemar, Jayawardene's house in Colombo, during his last year or so in office (he resigned to permit elections in February 1989) found a man alarmingly out of touch. He seemed remote, exhausted, bewildered, and astounded to read of himself compared to fascist dictators or South American tyrants.

On the positive side, post-Jayawardene Sri Lanka remains a democracy, and now boasts a small but important private sector. It might be that in the next decades Sri Lanka achieves the success that JR so passionately desired, but which proved so cruelly elusive during his own very long life.

Rupert Scott

Junius Richard Jayawardene, lawyer and politician: born Colombo 17 September 1906; Minister of Finance, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka 1947-53, Leader of Opposition 1970-77, Prime Minister 1977-78, President 1978-89; married 1935 Elina Rupesinge (one son); died Colombo 1 November 1996.

Siddig El Nigoumi


Siddig: effortlessly merged Western and African patterns

Photograph: The Ceramic Review

Like his pots, Siddig El Nigoumi was quiet and unassuming but full of conviction and strength.

Born in the Sudan, he developed an early interest in the malleable qualities of clay when, in the absence of conventional toys, he played with the highly plastic marl he discovered in swamp ponds by the side of the White Nile, as many children had done before him. A career as a potter did not follow immediately.

After receiving conventional teacher-training, Siddig worked for two years as Arabic Calligrapher for the Publications Bureau in Khartoum, an occupation which he enjoyed. The traditional forms and the discipline of the craft gave his work a powerful rhythmic sense, as well as an awareness of the importance of the placing of designs.

Inspired by the idea of becoming an artist, Siddig enrolled in a three-year course at the School of Art in Khartoum, during which time he began to specialise in pottery. A brief period of teaching followed until, in 1957, he was awarded a government grant to study ceramics at the Central School of Art in London. Afterwards, he returned to Khartoum where he was appointed deputy head of the ceramics department at the School of Art. During this time he married "Vicky" Vickery, a fellow student from the Central School of Art, and they started to raise their family.

Feeling that the opportunities for a creative potter in the Sudan were limited, Siddig, his wife and children moved to England in 1967. Here he faced the challenging but ultimately rewarding task of establishing himself and his work in a foreign country.

The family settled in Farnham and shortly afterwards Siddig became involved with the highly regarded ceramic course at what was then the Farnham School of Art – first as a technician, then as one of the distinguished band of part-time lecturers.

In the early 1970s Siddig was elected to membership of the Craft Potters Association, and became a regular exhibitor in galleries in London and elsewhere. His professional success was assured when in 1980 and 1981 the Victoria and Albert Museum acquired several of his pieces for its collection.

Despite being a highly skilled thrower, Siddig was attracted more to the slow and contemplative processes of handbuilding. Following his arrival in England, he made reduction-fired stoneware, with decorations based on the rich patterns of house decoration in Northern Sudanese Nubia. Its qualities recalled the subtle work carried out by Michael Cardew in West Africa a few years earlier. Siddig's main interest, however, lay in developing traditional African terracotta earthenwares.

All his pots were built by coiling and smoothing, or by pressing slabs of clay into plaster of Paris moulds. Some pieces were covered with a thin layer of slip made from Nile Valley clay, which produced a glowing rich orange-red colour. The slip was highly prized by Siddig who said it was irreplaceable.

Some surfaces were burnished by rubbing with a stone, and all were incised with a highly distinctive decoration which effortlessly merged sophisticated Western iconography with traditional African patterns. Landscapes often sported crisp drawings of aircraft or the assertive emblem of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, while others included delightful highly stylised animals or subtle repeating patterns. One dish in the collection of the V & A commemorates the "Great Royal Wedding" of 1981, the design incorporating a schematised scorpion and the Union flag.

Siddig was always willing to demonstrate and discuss his techniques with other potters, and enthusiasts watched enthralled as he slowly but methodically built up his pots and decorated them with beguiling skills. As a finale, on pots which had already been fired in the electric kiln, he would smoke the surface with a lighted taper of finely rolled newspaper, the flame licking the surface and depositing a thin but delicate mottled patterning, animating the pots with the fragrance of his native Africa.

Emmanuel Cooper

Siddig El Nigoumi, ceramicist: born 1 January 1931; married Eileen Vickery; died 10 October 1996.

John Young

As Mr McPherson, the gentle minister in *Take The High Road*, the actor John Young was a favourite with viewers of the Scottish television serial throughout the Eighties. The role of the widowed clergyman came along at the end of a long stage, film and television career, when most people would be thinking of retiring.

Born in Edinburgh during the First World War, Young did various jobs on leaving school before joining the Jevan Brandon-Thomas Company at the Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh. He had longed to become an actor since going to his first pantomime, at the age of four, recalling it as "sheer magic". He also acted in rep at the Citizens' Theatre, Glasgow and the Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton, and subsequently performed in most of Scotland's theatres.

Following war service, he resumed his stage career, with two of his most notable performances coming in Roddy MacMillan's *The Bevellers* and Bill Bryden's *Willie Rough*.

Young was most prolific on television throughout the Seventies, most notably as Ramsay MacDonald in Jim Allen's acclaimed BBC series *Days of Hope* (1975), and as Alexander Carus in the Granada Television production of *Adam Smith* (1972-73). He later made appearances in *Hess* (1978), the *Omega Factor* (1979), *The Houseman's Tale* (1985-87), and *The Justice Game* (1989).

He had already acted in the Scottish Television series *Garnock Way* (1976-78) when he landed the part of Ian McPherson in *Take the High Road*, which began in 1980 when ITV was looking for a new daytime soap opera. The calm of life in the fictional Scottish village of Glendarroch fitted the bill and Young brought to his performance a sensitivity that matched the role for which he had been cast. This was most tellingly seen when the minister, Mr McPherson, announced his retirement and the news that Glendarroch would be twined with the neighbouring parish of St Ninian's, Auchtaran. To pave the way, he and the minister of St Ninian's, the fire-and-brimstone Mr Parker (played by Young's own son, the actor Paul Young), took services in each other's parishes. The villagers rebelled, persuaded Mr McPherson to continue as minister, and the parish retained its independent status. Eventually, Mr McPherson did retire and handed over to his assistant, the Rev Michael Ross.

Young, who himself retired before the serial shortened its title to *High Road*, also acted in the films *Monty Python and The Holy Grail* (1975), *Monty Python's Life of Brian* (1979), *Black Jack* (as Dr Hunter, 1979), *Chariots of Fire* (as the Rev J. D. Liddell, father of the heroic athlete Eric, 1981), and *Time Bandits* (1981).

Anthony Hayward

John Young, actor: born Edinburgh 18 June 1916; married (one son); died Glasgow 30 October 1996.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

KHANNA: On 15 October, at Birmingham Women's Hospital, to Kate (nee Lambert) and Mickey, a daughter, Georgia, a sister for Sophia, Rowan and Julian.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephoned to 0171-293 2011 (24-hour answering machine 0171-293 2012) or faxed to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (notices, functions, Forthcoming marriages, Marriages) must be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £10 a line. VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

TODAY: Prince Edward, Trustee, attends the Duke of Edinburgh's Award London Regional Conference for Award Leaders at the Barbican, London EC2. Prince Michael attends the Veteran Car Club Annual Dinner at the Café Royal, London W1. **TOMORROW:** Prince Michael participates in the London to Brighton Centenary Veteran Car Run.

Changing of the Guard

TODAY: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion Welsh Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Welsh Guards. **TOMORROW:** The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 10am.

Birthdays

TODAY: Lord Ashburton, former chairman, Barings, 68; The Earl of Aylesford, former Lord-Lieutenant of the West Midlands region, 78; Lady Bathurst, former diplomat, 76; Sir David Calcutt QC, former Master, Magdalene College, Cambridge, 66; Sir Clifford Chetwood, chairman, Broadgate Properties, 68; Mr Keith Emerson, rock musician, 52; The Right Rev Philip Goodrich, Bishop of Worcester, 67; Mr Desmond Hamill, television reporter, 60; Dr Ronald Hedley, former Director, Natural History Museum, 68; Mr Paul Johnson, author and editor, 68; Mr Alan Jones, grand prix driver, 50; Mr David Lea, assistant General Secretary, TUC, 59; Sir Bruce Martin QC, former chairman, North Western Regional Health Authority, 58; Miss Juliet Mills, actress, 55; Dame Pauline Neville-Jones, Political Director and Deputy Under-Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 57; Sir Peter Newsam, former Director, London Institute of Education, 68; Sir Ronald Oxburgh, Rector, Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, 62; Professor Norman Pye, geographer, 83; Mr Ivor Roberts-Jones, sculptor, 83; Mr Ken Rosewall, tennis player, 62; Lord Sainsbury of Preston Candover, former chairman of Sainsbury's, 69; Mr Bruce Welch, rock musician, 55.

TOMORROW: Mr Adam Ant, rock singer, 42; Mr Kenneth Baker MP, former government minister, 62; Mr John Barry, popular musician and composer, 63; Mr John Biffen MP, former government minister, 66; Mr Charles Bronson, actor, 74; Mr Nicholas Budgen MP, 59; The Earl of Caithness, former Minister of State, Transport, 48; Mr Francis Cook MP, 61; Sir Kenneth Corley, former chief executive, Joseph Lucas, 88; Miss Violetta Elvin, former prima ballerina, 71; Mr Roy Emerson, tennis player, 60; Mrs Jean Flood, former Principal of Newnham College, Cambridge, 81; Mr Michael Gallemore, former editor, *Sporting Life*, 52; Sir Philip Goodhart, former MP, 71; Mr John Heppell MP, 48; Mr Larry Holmes, heavyweight boxing champion, 47; Sir Ludovic Kennedy, writer and broadcaster, 77; Sir Christopher Leaver, wine merchant, and former Lord Mayor of London, 59; Viscount Linley, furniture designer, 35; Lulu (Marie Lawrie), singer, 48; Maj-Gen Viscount Monckton of Brenchley, banker, 81; Mr Kenneth Morgan, former trade union leader, 68; Mr Conor Cruise O'Brien, editor, author and politician, 79; The Hon Michael Pakenham, diplomat, 53; Sir Timothy Raison, former MP and government minister, 67; Mr Albert Reynolds, former Irish prime minister (Taoiseach), 63; Mr Nick Simper, rock musician, 50; Mr Vanni Treves, senior partner, Macfarlanes, and chairman, BBA Group, 56; Vice-Admiral Sir John Webster, former Flag Officer, Plymouth, 64; Mr Martin Williams, High Commissioner to Zimbabwe, 55; Mr Ian Wright, footballer, 33.

Anniversaries

TODAY: Births: Daniel Boone, frontiersman, 1734; Marie Antoinette, Queen of King Louis XVI of France, 1755; The Aga Khan III, 1877; Burt Lancaster (Burton Stephen Lancaster), actor, 1913. **Deaths:** Richard Hooker, theologian, 1600; Jenny Lind (Johanna Maria), soprano, 1887; George Bernard Shaw, playwright, 1950; James Grover Thurber, humorous writer and cartoonist, 1961. **On this day:** the *Daily Mirror* was first published, as a daily newspaper for women, 1903; the first crossword puzzle to appear in a British newspaper was published in the *Sunday Express*, 1924; Haile Selassie was crowned as Emperor of Ethiopia, 1930; Penguin was acquitted of obscenity in publishing the book *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, 1960; Channel 4 television was started, 1982. **Today** is the Feast Day of All Souls, St Marcian of Cyrrhus and St Victorinus of Pettau.

TOMORROW: Births: Lucan, Roman poet, 39; Karl Baedeker, guidebook publisher, 1801; André-Georges Malraux, writer and politician, 1901. **Deaths:** Constantius II, Roman emperor of the East, 361; Annie Oakley (Phoebe Anne Oakley Mozee (Moses)), entertainer and marksmanship, 1926; Henri-Emile Benoît Matisse, painter, 1954. **On this day:** the Act of Supremacy was passed, making the king head of the English Church, 1534; Laika, the Russian space dog, was sent into space in *Sputnik II*, 1957. **Tomorrow** is the Feast Day of St Amicus, St Hubert, St Malachy of Armagh, St Martin de Porres, St Pirminus, St Rumwald and St Winifred or Gwenfrewi.

Lectures

TODAY

National Gallery: Lynda Stephens, "Remembering (i): *Costa and Maineri. The Virgin and Child Enthroned (La Pala Strozzi)*", 12pm.
Victoria and Albert Museum: Paul Harrison, "Textiles of the Great Exhibition", 2.30pm.
Tate Gallery: Laurence Bradbury, "At Home and Abroad: Gainsborough and Richard Wilson", 1pm.
British Museum: Paul Collins, "The Royal City of Susa", 1.15pm.
National Portrait Gallery: Peter Davies, "John Bratby in Context", 3pm.

TOMORROW

Tate Gallery: Laurence Bradbury, "Grand Tour Gains: the rewards of 18th-century travel in Italy", 2.30pm.
National Portrait Gallery: Susan Morris, "The Children of Charles I", 3pm.

Drinking deep from a common well

faith & reason

What exactly is the common good and how can it be achieved? Dr Margaret Atkins of Trinity and All Saints College, Leeds recommends streams of community spirit and sharing

Every thoughtful citizen, whether Communist or Conservative or Communitarian, ought to be grateful. The Catholic bishops' document, *The Common Good and the Catholic Church's Social Teaching*, is lucid, principled, nuanced and courteous. The bishops are inviting us to think, slowly, with care and detachment, about practical policies and the principles that underlie them.

They are also offering us a language with which to think. "The common good" is no slick New Labour slogan. It has been fundamental to serious discussion since Aristotle. While his pupil Alexander the Great was busy absorbing free city-states into a vast empire that stretched to the edges of India, Aristotle was writing this: "Constitutions that aim at the common benefit are correct, according with what is strictly speaking just" (*Pol* III.6). The common good is the good we share by being part of a community. We may differ drastically about how to achieve it; but what else could sensibly be the focus of debate about how to live together?

The common good is the flourishing of our community, which allows us as members to flourish within that community. It embraces specific goods: material needs, personal freedoms, education, a just and peaceful order. Christians believe that it is underpinned by a greater and ultimate common good, the shared life with God that we are finally promised. For we were made to be happy when we live socially, when we care for one another, when we share our goals, our activities, and our goods.

So fundamental is the notion of common good that some discussions become almost meaningless without it. Take the environmental debate. Water, earth, air, fauna and flora, the basics of our survival, make no sense as private property: for they function as systems. If I destroy "my" rainforest, "your" weather is damaged; if I pollute "my" spring, you will be poisoned. Hence "the environment is one of the 'common goods' which are the shared responsibility of the human race".

Thomas Aquinas, the favourite Catholic theologian, would have been more radical even than the bishops. To him, all private property seemed problematic. How could we own anything? Surely everything created belongs to God. Aquinas appealed to Genesis to argue that God has allowed us a limited control over the earth to support human life. But even so, how can we own anything privately?

Aquinas's response is pragmatic: private ownership is often more responsible and more competent, and tends to make for peace. But it is allowable only insofar as it works towards its proper end, which is for the sake of common use. Not for personal gain, not for security, not for status, but to serve the common use.

Even Yorkshire Water have just circulated a letter which could have been based on Aquinas's principles. Not a word about profit. Instead, an account of the many measures they have taken to preserve the common water supply, in both our homes and our rivers. But we could make their job still easier by defining them not as a business primarily designed to make money, but precisely as a public servant, delegated to serve the common good. For private companies, if they have no natural ties with the community, are constantly tempted to care only for the appearance, not the reality, of public service. Why should they do anything else, when we ourselves tell them that their goal is profit? "Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters" (Isaiah 55.1).

Aristotle confined citizenship to the privileged few. Contemporary democracy insists that all are citizens. The Catholic bishops have reminded us that "all" must include the poor and marginalised, those most likely to be forgotten by the powers that be.

Perhaps the most striking image of our private attempts to appropriate a common resource is the ubiquitous bottle of mineral water. Expensive, throwaway, energy-squandering – yet so rapidly has it become essential to everyday life. And when we, the affluent and influential, draw our water only from favoured and distant streams, what then? Who will care enough to protect the purity of our common supply, the water on which our poor depend? A society's attitude to water is deeply revealing: for water is both the substance and the symbol of life: "Those who are thirsty shall drink – it is my free gift – out of the spring whose water is life" (Revelation 21.6).

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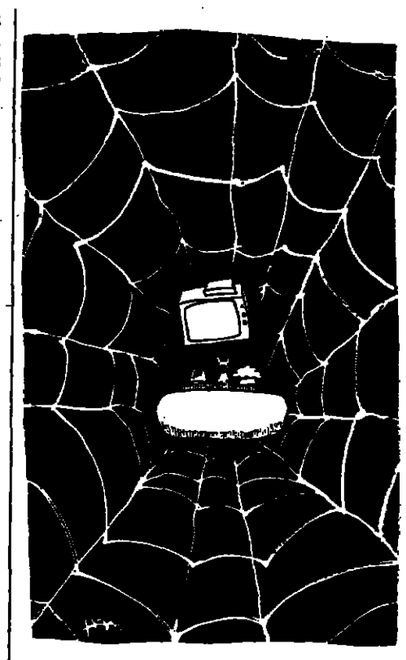
There is a way to stop Murdoch's TV takeover

BSkyB's profits are up. This week, amid dawning realisation of the size of his digital TV coup, Rupert Murdoch treats us to a demonstration of his satellite power by cancelling the launch of the Warner Channel. He is indeed a phenomenon. But make no mistake, this is no unstoppable force of nature. Murdoch does, technologically speaking, bestride the narrow world but as the man said about Caesar, the fault that we are underlings lies not in the Sky but in ourselves ... or rather, in the pusillanimity of a political class so in thrall to his newspapers that is refuses to subject him to the rigours of fair competition.

Rupert Murdoch's editorial fan club puts it about that he is a great entrepreneur. He is, but over the years his biggest enterprise has been the manipulation of regulatory regimes established by governments. The man lives and dies by his capacity to swim in media markets characterised by rapid technological change, high up-front costs and a natural tendency towards monopoly. It is not usually economics which explains how they work, but politics. Like most businessmen he prefers less competition to more, which is why owning politically influential newspapers is always a sound investment. On digital television he has played a suave game, operating by stealth to secure a legislative outcome (the 1996 Broadcasting Act) which suits him to a tee. Murdoch is now poised to corner the market in direct satellite broadcasting to households. All the cant (and his editors are great suppliers of cant) won't conceal his yen for monopoly power.

His track record – here, in the United States, in Australia, in East Asia – is evidence enough of his project. He is not going to let up. It is therefore up to the authors of regulation to see what his game is and tighten the rules accordingly – not to hamstring Rupert Murdoch as a player but to ensure that he faces maximum competition on as level as field as can be rolled. Instead of that, our political class has either actively encouraged him or dithered – or gone on pilgrimage to his Australian lair.

Mr Murdoch's acolytes like to pretend that criticism of their man is a product of small-minded envy, an exhibition of the British penchant for bringing down greatness. They apparently cannot see the difference between admiration of energy and imagination (and Mr Murdoch has those in abundance) and alarm at his naked grasping after control in arenas where the very stuff of democracy is at stake – as it is in matters of news and information. They argue that Mr Murdoch's power is market-borne; that he should not be censured because so few have risen to take him on. But crediting his perseverance (and the accuracy of his persistent refusal to over-



estimate public taste) does not diminish the urgency of stopping him from cutting or eliminating the competition.

The issue at hand is control of digitised television signals from satellites. What's the problem, some ask, arguing that technology changes so fast that it dissolves monopoly: we should take the Internet as a model of how popular choice and technology combine for the general benefit. Yet the recent history of information technology also shows how the front man (Bill Gates is the name) scoops the pool. Once an interface is established as the industry standard, breaking into the same market becomes well-nigh impossible.

The Broadcasting Act 1996 is allowing Mr Murdoch first tilt at building and selling the control mechanism for digital television. What he has just done to Warner is a ready sign of how he will use that control. The object of policy must be to establish conditions in which household choice is maximised. We need to ask whether Murdoch as a programme producer should even be allowed to develop and manufacture the means by which programmes are delivered. The history of telecommunications regulation in Britain and of the development of competition law in information technology in the US offer plenty of precedents: it would be healthier all round if Murdoch were kept out of the market for gateway technologies. Alternatively he could be forced – as Microsoft have been – to franchise the gateway technology to manufacturers of set-top control boxes, which could preserve the space needed for other broadcasters.

What is needed – the Department of Trade and Industry has yet to grasp this – is common-carrier status for the circuitry delivering digital signals to the home television set, into which the programme producers' filters and smart cards can call it.

Murdoch is shortly to sign contracts for the supply of set-top boxes matching his specification. Any government action that affects those contracts will, necessarily, be retrospective and so might raise the question of compensation. Far better, however, to pay Murdoch that rent now than to crimp and distort the use of this technology for decades. There has long been a need for some brave politician to think of emulating Stanley Baldwin and make the power of Murdoch and the other press barons a populist issue. That is something for another day. Today's priority is to acknowledge that public policy for digital broadcasting has a big hole in it, but that there are ways to fill it.

This newspaper is a competitor with Murdoch titles; we have an axe to grind. If policy-makers refuse to wake up, it is, dear readers, over to you. The future of your television choice is now at stake.

▪ LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ▪

Rationing health care: politicians should not be afraid to let the people decide

Sir: Your article on the future of the NHS (30 October) ended with the difficult issue of rationing health care, but failed to consider the potential for public involvement.

There are many mechanisms for consulting the public. I have been running one such scheme for over three years for Somerset Health Authority and it has shown that members of the public can make a valuable contribution. They readily understand that a health authority has a limited budget and priorities must be set. If the consultation system is well designed, they act responsibly, bring their own experiences to the discussion and make sensible judgements about the relative merits of different ways of spending the limited cash available.

You suggest that politicians are trying to avoid the whole rationing issue because they fear the electoral consequences. You are almost certainly correct. The obvious response is to inject a truly democratic element into our arrangements by encouraging direct public involvement.
Dr ANN RICHARDSON
London NW3

Sir: Labour's hands will not be tied, as Jack O'Sullivan suggests ("Is the NHS safe under Dr Blair's team?", 30 October), if it refuses to pledge new funds for the National Health Service.

Money cannot solve the current problems of the NHS, which are largely a consequence of the Conservative government's ill-judged efforts to turn it into a giant supermarket. These "reforms" fragmented the service, increased transaction costs, dealt a terrible blow to staff morale and undermined public confidence.

The Institute for Public Policy Research report "New Agenda for Health" shows how much can be done without spending new money. It includes detailed proposals on how to abolish the internal market, how to make strides towards improving health, not just curing illness, how to establish an equitable basis for rationing, how to tackle the democratic deficit and how to position the NHS to take advantage of technological change in the next decade.

We also argue that if more public money were available, it would be better spent on education, jobs, housing and other such measures which really do help to improve the health of the nation as a whole.
ANNA COOTE
Deputy Director, IPPR
London WC2

Sir: Since the health service reforms there has been a complete lack of central strategic planning, the philosophy being to allow NHS trusts to battle it out in a market-forces war.

If the public do not want to pay more for their health service, then a severe rationalisation of the number of specialists within hospitals and of hospitals within regions has to take place. But it must be properly managed, otherwise patients suffer and staff become demoralised.

If on the other hand tax-payers do want more spent, rather than seeing hospitals closed down, then the politicians have a responsibility to do this. Of course, cost effectiveness and efficiency must be part of the bargain, and the secrecy that has surrounded both purchasers and providers since the internal market began should be stopped. It should be remembered, however, that overall the NHS still delivers the least expensive quality services amongst the developed nations.

When Jack O'Sullivan suggests we may need fewer doctors, the comparison with the USA is misleading. The UK has 61per cent fewer doctors per 1,000 population than the USA already, so the latter can afford to reduce their doctors by 25per cent and still have more than we have. France, with the same population as ourselves, has twice as many doctors and 65 per cent more beds (OECD Health Data).
PETER M BROWN FRCS
Clinical Director, Head & Neck Specialities
Milton Keynes General NHS Trust
Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire

Sir: Jack O'Sullivan argues that with regard to the NHS, "Labour is as short as ever on fresh ideas". If only it were to look to its roots, Labour could maintain and improve the best elements of the Government's reforms, and find a means of improving health care without tax increases.

There are two options. One is to increase the funding of the NHS. This will simply not be possible beyond what John Major has already pledged since it will require tax increases.

The other option is to do it outside the NHS through individuals, either off their own backs or through co-operative schemes, devoting a greater share of their income net of tax to private health care. Labour's problem is that it still at heart regards this as somehow morally flawed, and is thus blinded to the possibilities available for NHS-private sector co-operation.

Labour's attitude is bizarre since its 19th-century roots lie in the very self-help welfare tradition of friendly societies and mutuals in which most non-state health care originated.
STEPHEN POLLARD
Head of Research
Social Market Foundation
London SW1

Moral education or indoctrination?

Sir: Politicians want morality to be taught, but you consider the attempt absurd (leading article, 28 October)

If by "teaching morality" we mean getting children to obey a set of rules, then it is not absurd to attempt this. It is called indoctrination, and many pedagogic, psychological and sociological devices and to do this have been used over generations, often achieving a high success rate.

If by "teaching morality" we mean a process in which we give children and young people an understanding of the fundamental moral perspectives in our society and give them practice in making their own well-informed judgements, then, again, it can be done. Indeed, there are educational programmes in schools, colleges and universities in the UK doing just that. In the University of Glamorgan undergraduates in many disciplines and professions, including nurses and police officers, take such courses.

It is not absurd to set out to "teach morality" but we have to be clear what we mean by it, and what we intend to do.
RICHARD ROWSON
Principal Lecturer in Moral Philosophy and Professional Ethics, University of Glamorgan
London SW3

Sir: The present concern with moral regeneration raises several issues for us who teach in that area. As educators we are already working to produce critical thinking. This is perceived in some quarters as a challenge to morality: in fact it is only a challenge to an authoritarian view of morality. An authoritarian or rule-based morality is not the only legitimate moral approach.

Moreover, it is not the case that teachers have somehow conspired to maintain a moral relativism or moral vacuum from which only others can rescue us.

There are many schools which maintain a proper and sensible balance in educating children in both critical thinking and moral values. These are not topics which may be taught, but skills which must be developed. We cannot agree that there is a body of knowledge called "morality" which can be taught. In the case of this school, a Philosophy for Children programme is being successfully implemented in which moral awareness and critical thinking are developed through being practised and enjoyed. To see a group of 11-year-old boys and girls engaged in moral and ethical debate is an experience which those who see schools as moral wastelands would do well to enjoy.
BERNARD TRAFFORD
Headmaster
DAVID BARLOW
PETER WHALE
Theology and Philosophy Department
Wolverhampton Grammar School

Sir: On 31 October 1987 *Woman's Own* printed the statement by Baroness Thatcher that "there is no such thing as society". On 31 October 1996 you printed part of the proposed "code of values" on which the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority is consulting. It declares that "we value families ... as the basis of a society in which people care for others". Have the Conservatives recreated society in exactly nine years?
ERIC THOMPSON
London NW2

Irish hero? Liam Neeson (centre) portrays a man "willing to compromise with British imperialism"

Collins myth bent to serve peace process

Sir: I agree with Ronan Bennett when he says that conservative British commentators are not really worried about the historical accuracy, or otherwise, of Neil Jordan's epic *Michael Collins* ("Hidden agenda", October 31). What they really find objectionable is that Jordan has dared to depict British rule in Ireland in a bad light.

But as someone who comes from the opposite end of the political scale I am worried about the historical accuracy of Jordan's film. Not because it shows car bombs before there were car bombs or because it does not fully investigate the Unionist perspective in early 20th-century Ireland, but because the film seeks to rewrite what it means to be an Irish nationalist.

The hero of *Michael Collins* is Michael Collins and the villain is Eamon de Valera. Collins is the hero because he is pragmatic and realistic and willing to compromise with British imperialism. De Valera is the villain, because he sticks to his guns, refuses to budge and will settle for nothing less than a complete British withdrawal from Ireland. In the past that would have made de Valera the hero and Collins the traitor. But Jordan has rewritten Irish history so that ditching your principles in the name of reconciliation is interpreted as the authentic expression of true Irish nationalism.

In short, Jordan's film is infused with the values of today's peace process. In Ireland today it is those who are prepared to compromise their principles in the name of peace and reconciliation who are held in high esteem, while those who stick to their guns are cast as the villains. Jordan has projected this value system into the past.
BRENDAN O'NEILL
Edgware, Middlesex

Labour has fought Murdoch stranglehold on digital TV

Sir: Polly Toynbee (28 October) continues to assert that Labour has acquiesced in allowing Rupert Murdoch to develop a monopoly position over future digital television services. As the Opposition spokespersons who took the recent Broadcasting Bill through all its House of Commons stages we continually raised both the issue of conditional access and the need to ensure that there was compatibility between digital television systems.

On the penultimate day of the Bill's proceedings we finally accepted a reassurance from the DTI minister Ian Taylor MP that a new government clause to the Bill when combined with the relevant regulations would "ensure the greatest practicable mutual technical compatibility of digital television services across all three delivery mechanisms – terrestrial, satellite and cable".

It is now up to the Government to ensure that those regulations provide the necessary powers to Oftel and the Independent Television Commission to ensure that this compatibility exists. Should there be any doubt about the adequacy of the Government's proposals we will ensure that they are debated and voted on in Parliament.

If BSkyB sign contracts for decoder boxes before the regulations have been finalised they must risk the regulators declaring that they cannot be used.
Dr LEWIS MOONIE MP
(Kirkaldy, Lab)
Opposition spokesperson on broadcasting
GEOFF HOON MP
(Ashfield, Lab)
Opposition spokesperson on trade and industry
House of Commons, London SW1

Barcelona has lessons for the rest of us too

Sir: London is a marvellous capital which every Briton should be proud of, and yet Londoners cannot agree on what sort of state it's actually in.

On the one hand we have those who are currently trying to convince us that London is enjoying a renaissance in culture and fashion, while on the other are those who imply, as in "A capital vision – from Spain" (29 October), that London is somehow in need of rescuing.

With all the attention lavished upon the capital, it is small wonder that Londoners are perceived as arrogant and self-obsessed and the capital consequently despised by many across the nation.

Just how good does London have to be to satisfy its spoilt inhabitants? There is no reason why Birmingham, Sheffield, Leicester and other cities attempting to transform themselves cannot also learn from Barcelona's rejuvenation.

The focus on London's "plight" amounts to a tacit disregard of cities far more in need of such attention. The implication is that we can all go to pot just as long as London twinkles and shines.
ROKOS FRANGOS
Coventry

Letters should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL (Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk) and include a daytime telephone number.
Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.

LETTER *from* THE EDITOR

We need some more enemies. I am now approaching this editing business in a scientific spirit and my researches suggest that newspapers are defined as much by their natural enemies as anything else. Thus, *The Daily Mail* hates liberals, Channel 4, shifty foreigners; *The Telegraph* hates Irish republicans, European federalists and people who have had abortions; *The Sun* hates certain football managers (I can never remember which ones), women with their clothes on ...

And *The Independent*? Well, we are primly promiscuous in our disapproval. Our political and commercial foes are legion, from Tory nationalists to Rupert Murdoch. But we are, it must be confessed, a little short of proper, blood-summoning, sinew-stiffening enemies. Paul Johnson won't do; hating him is over-fashionable. Michael Howard would be a popular choice among readers; but he would be far more worried if *The Independent* didn't consider him an enemy: give him a favourable mention and it would do him such damage with the right that he'd probably sue. The same is true of many other obvious targets.

What about picking some wider group to demonise, then? Who could we treat as our version of single mothers? Utility chairmen? Purveyors of combat knives? Cult leaders? The designers of Legoland? Men who wear moustaches? You see the problem – it's all too pointlessly easy. And in some of these cases, the spasm to be fair ruins what would otherwise have been a promising campaign. In an editorial the other day we took a savage pop at media studies, the sociology of the Nineties, and thus at professors of media studies. No good either; they only smiled knowingly and ... analysed us back. I think the only answer is to seize randomly upon some previously innocuous-seeming group and attack them relentlessly until circulation soars. But since this is purely a commercial, branding exercise, it must be a unique enemy – some group no one has yet found an excuse to attack. Canadians? Manicurists? The people of Chelmsford, with their goatish lusts and dark philosophies? All suggestions gratefully received.

I only took this job in order to be glamorous. I thought I'd go to all these swanky parties and exciting receptions, arriving late and smoking with the latest news, before dropping a few tinkling epigrams and causing famous authors to choke with admiration. No go. Apparently, the job of newspaper editors is to edit newspapers – they never made that clear at the time – and this makes it difficult to get out in the evening.

This has been a typical week.

What about picking some wider group to demonise? Utility chairmen? Cult leaders? Men who wear moustaches? You see the problem – it's all too easy

I was invited to the launch of Andrew Neil's book, arrived just too late and was refused a drink. Then there was an incredibly glitzy *Vanity Affair* affair – Tina Brown, Harold Evans, Michael Jagger, Salman Fry, Stephen Rushdie, etc, etc. Too bad: stuck in traffic.

Never mind. I did finally make it to lunch with *Granta* magazine, however, which is glamorous in a literary sense. A long taxi-ride prepared me for a grand entrance: the restaurant doors swung open: I had an epigram ready to spit ... but there had been a mix-up and there was nobody there.

Finally, a word from James Gilmour, who writes spiritedly from Kilmarnock, strongly attacking this paper's "fence-sitting" attitude to party politics: "The British newspaper-buying public really don't appreciate 'fairness' ... what they like is pure unashamed prejudice." Mr Gilmour, I think you may be right. Chelmsford had better watch out.

Andrew Marr

QUOTE UNQUOTE

I certainly have never been against corporal punishment in schools. I have always regarded it as a very useful deterrent – **Gillian Shephard**, *Education Secretary.*

There is still another 9lb to go and time is running out. If all else fails, I shall have to consider amputation – **Michael Mates**, *Tory MP, who is nearing the deadline of a competitive slimming campaign.*

Nelson would not have commanded even a rowing boat if judged by the politically correct standards of today – **Michael Stephen**, *Tory MP, discussing the Wrens at sea controversy.*

He's a national hero and a role model for youngsters and if it is true that Gazza beat up his wife, then sending him to represent England overseas can only give the impression that wife-beating is acceptable in the UK – **Sandra Horley**, *of the women's rights group Refuge, on footballer Paul Gascoigne.*

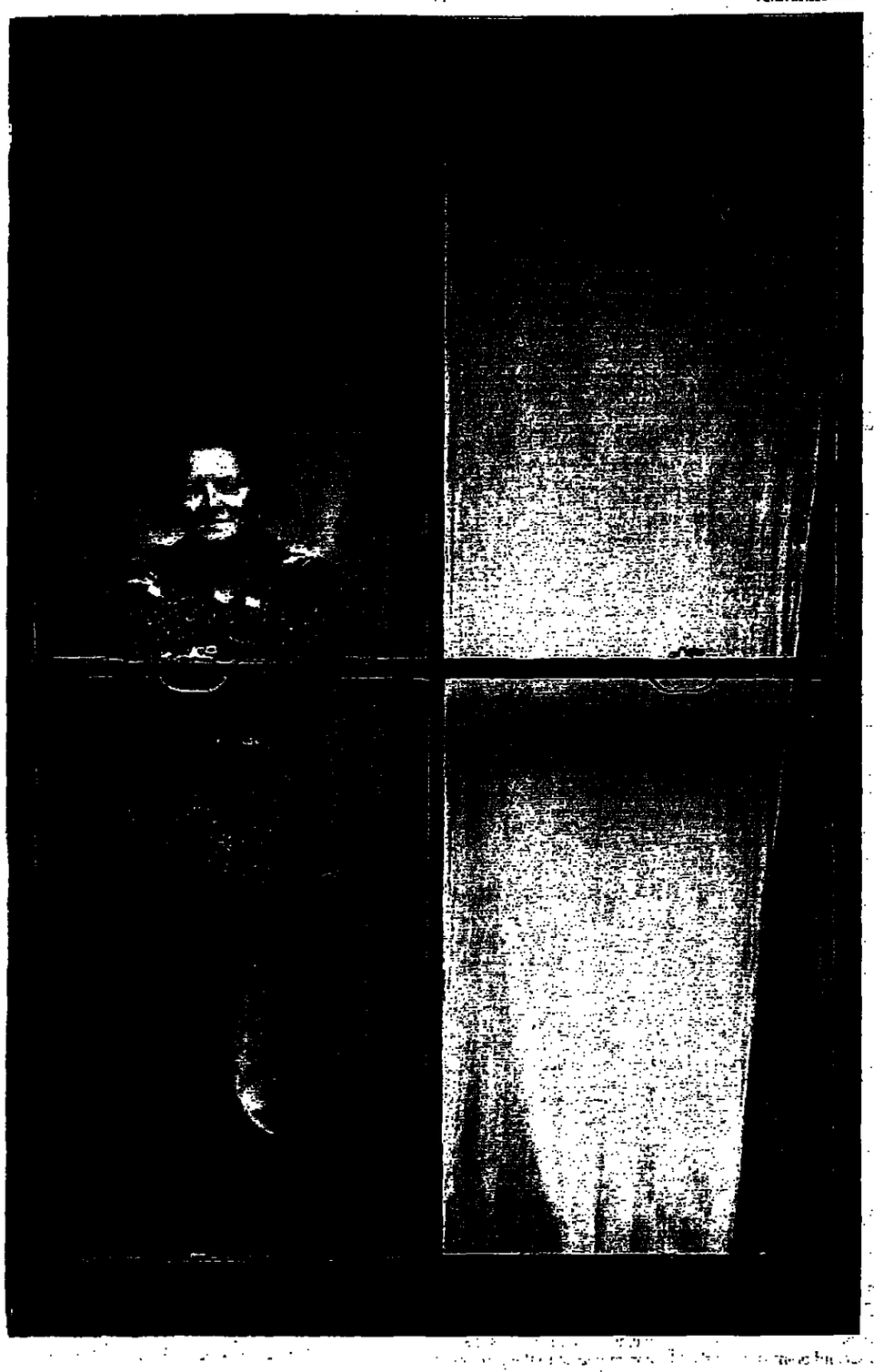
Having spent the last 10 years in the filthiest business in the universe, it's a pleasure to announce the end of the Stone Roses – *the singer* **Ian Brown** *reporting the demise of the Manchester-based pop group.*

the saturday story

An artist cast into controversy

Rachel Whiteread stirs up strong passions: her 'House' sculpture won plaudits from the critics and brickbats from the locals. Now her plans for a Holocaust memorial in Vienna have aroused opposition. She talks to Peter Popham about her work

PETER MACDIARMID



Rachel Whiteread, the sculptor who became world famous three years ago when she made a concrete cast of a London terraced house, titling it *House*, has done it again: dwarfed the efforts of her peers by the force of sheer controversy.

It's another concrete cast, another community, another city, another set of representatives and bureaucrats: but once again Whiteread's work has been catapulted out of the realm of the artistic into the bear pit of politics.

The place is a square in central Vienna named Judenplatz, "Jews' Square", so called because it is the location of the city's historic ghetto, and the site of a notorious 15th century pogrom. Now the veteran Nazi hunter, 87-year-old Simon Wiesenthal, a long-term resident of Vienna himself, has persuaded the city to devote the centre of the square to a Holocaust memorial. Determined to learn from the mistakes of Berlin, where another Holocaust memorial project has been snared in contention and bad feeling for years, the committee appointed to see the project through speedily drew up a shortlist of 10 artists and architects. From this list Whiteread, whose work is now to be found in museums all over the world, was chosen.

Like all Whiteread's work, the Judenplatz monument is in the form of a cast, this time of a book-lined library with a rose ceiling. The form that results is an oblong block, with roughly the dimensions of a room in one of the houses overlooking the square, and with its walls scored by the impress of thousands of identical books. At one end is the impress of large double doors. Around the base are simple, brief legends, listing concentration camps, and the number (65,000) of Austrian Jews killed by the Nazis.

It is, in other words, to judge from the model, an extremely low-key, well-mannered, unobtrusive sort of object, which will none the less (it is hoped) have the same sort of uncanny quality that gave *House* such a strange and powerful resonance.

Like *House*, however, but in this case before anything has become visible, what Wiesenthal was so anxious to avoid has happened. A group of residents of the square have got up a petition with 2,000 signatures to stop the monument. The project has been beset by unaccountable postponements. Meanwhile the city's Social Democrat mayor, an important backer of the monument, has been seriously weakened by the result of October's general election, which gave an unprecedented boost to the nationalist right-wing Freedom Party on Vienna city council. The original completion date was 9 November, but in Vienna the deadline will pass unmarked. In London an exhibition about the project opens on Wednesday at the Architectural Association.

For the modern artist, controversy is a rare gift; like alchemy, it can turn dross, or concrete, into gold. It's a gift Rachel Whiteread shares with the only other young British artist who compares with her in terms of world-wide recognition, Damien Hirst. The difference is that, while Hirst has been looking to shock and offend ever since he discovered formaldehyde, Whiteread was unprepared for the storm that broke with the unveiling of *House*.

After all, she was merely continuing to do what she had been doing for years in obscurity, but this time in a slightly different context. "As an undergraduate at Brighton in the painting department I was getting frustrated with making paintings, getting bored with the edges of canvasses," she remembers. "So I started to make almost three-dimensional paintings that led into very simple casting. Then the artist Richard Wilson came to Brighton and did a metal casting workshop and I just thought it was amazing that you could press a spoon into sand and pour molten metal in and then you had a spoon but the spoonness of the spoon had gone. It completely intrigued me that you could do this very simple process and completely change your perception of an object.

"The first piece of sculpture I made was after I left the Slade – it was a cast of the inside of a wardrobe which was then covered in black felt. It was in 1987-88, and that's when things started to happen."

Whiteread had found her path. For most ordinary mortals, it was no more or less mystifying than the other obsessive activities that take a grip on modern artists and won't let go – the bricks, the wrapping of buildings, the formaldehyde. Whiteread cast mattresses, hot water bottles, baths, the spaces under tables and chairs; she cast floors and shelves and mortuary slabs.

Her ambitions grew bigger, but the highly specialised, deeply eccentric nature of her activity remained the same. Now she set about casting an entire room. Imagine the labour involved – and Whiteread has always been (and remains) dedicated to the artisanal task. A friend remembers her in those days, before her fame, wrapping up warm in the dead of winter and bicycling off the house in Archway, north London, where she was doing it.

The room eventually won the Turner Prize in 1993, but she couldn't stop there, however: like the old woman who swallowed a fly, one thing led to another, and culminated in *House*. With the support of James Lingwood of the avant garde commissioning group Artangel, she scoured London for a suitable house. Finally the terrace in Bow, east London, hove into view. "I'd cycled past that row of houses for years on my way to the studio," she says. "I said, yeah, we'll definitely do it here." Three weeks later all the houses had been destroyed apart from the middle one, where an extraordinary man called Mr Gale was holding out. It was even more perfect."

Finally Mr Gale got his house round the corner, and Whiteread and her team set to work. "We made it completely under wraps, kept it really really quiet, until the day before we took down the walls to expose it, and then it was there and all hell broke loose ... I remember thinking before it was finished that it might be a bit controversial – and of course it was incredibly controversial."

It's still slightly mysterious why. Various different types of rage and excitement smashed together over *House* – the Carl Andre's pile-of-bricks philistine factor, local disgust at "wasted money", local political fury at having what was called "this monstrosity" dumped in beautiful Bow – all in the glare of intense media interest. The result was the art world's equivalent of a nuclear explosion.

In its intense simplicity and peculiarity, *House* also proved irresistible to the critics, who three years later are still cranking out dissertations and monographs about this long-vanished object.

In a commemorative book on the project, for example, entitled *House* (published by Phaidon), Antony Vidler rehearses just a few of the intellectual acrobatics the work has provoked: how *House* is seen to have transformed a realist house into an abstract composition, how people felt that *House* "mutilated ... the archetypal space of homeliness," how its blank windows evoked associations with the evil eye.

But Whiteread, who does not enjoy talking about her work for public consumption, is dubious about most of her critics' efforts. "I'm 33 years old, I've made a relatively small body of work, but there's volumes and volumes and volumes of stuff that's been written. I think, well, if you're going to do that you do that, but for me its beside the point, what I'm interested in is making work."

What is not beside the point for her – a petite figure with broad-set pale blue eyes, whispy auburn hair and remarkably broad shoulders – is getting to grips with the work: precisely what she is not able to do with the project in Vienna. And it's driving her mad.

"I feel very removed from it now. I hate the media and I hate doing interviews. But I know because of Vienna and what's happening in Vienna I have to actually speak out now about the situation over there – especially because the thing's supposed to open in a week's time and everyone's going to wonder why it hasn't done. So I feel its important now that I have a little bit of a voice – I feel a lot of people would like to blame me personally for its not being there yet.

"Its very difficult to tell how vulnerable the project is – I've been told under no circumstances will it not happen but I don't know how to take that. I've got a scrapbook, and this has become my only way of working with the piece now. I just want to be over there physically making it, but I can't. *House* was the most gruelling experience I've ever been through, but Vienna is rapidly catching up."

jo brand's week

I am sure I am not alone among performers in being rather pleased about Jack Dee's attack on the critic Victor Lewis-Smith. I am not a fan of violent behaviour, but if anyone deserves a slap it is Mr L-S. Reasonably clever and fairly agile with words he may be, but his vitriolic personal attacks on people descend to a level which, if directed at someone in a pub, would ensure swift retribution in the fist department. Perhaps his most heinous crime is that he himself has written and been in a comedy series, the appallingness of which has never been and never will be witnessed on television again, one hopes. In my book, this doesn't give him a leg to stand on. Still, I hope this attack doesn't discourage Mr L-S from going out. There are hundreds more people who wouldn't mind having a crack at him.

Theme parks are springing up like rashes all over the world. The latest one will be built just outside Athens and named Mythos Park, which gives you a vague clue as to the theme that it will be following. Yes, the Greeks are going Ancient Greek with a park full of Greek gods. I suppose it's a vague improvement on Disneyland and Greek scholars appear to be behind it as a stepping-stone on to further learning. An Oxford professor remarked that children "start with stories or a visit to a play like this and then they go on to read Homer". I can't see it myself. I don't know many kids that went to Astérix Park in France and then wanted to read Caesar's *Gallic Wars*.

Once upon a time, women who did not feel safe to go out at night could at least venture out during the day without fear of being attacked, because there were always plenty of people around. It seems even the refuge of daylight and crowds is disappearing, as evidenced by the incident in Birmingham recently in which a schoolgirl was dragged screaming into a car by three men in full view of lots of people, none of whom lifted a finger. I have to say, had I been there I would have felt obliged to do something. Who are all these people who ignore things like this and what is the matter with them? Many apologists for the non-action argument seem to think that it's fear for their own safety, but I'm afraid, often, it's a more pathetic reason than that. I think lots of people are scared of looking stupid in front of others in case they've read the situation wrong. Human beings are strange creatures. Someone coughs on a train and everyone looks at them like they've just committed a murder. We can't seem to bear to stand out from the crowd. Well, I'm afraid we have to, because if we don't, the sort of blokes who bundled this schoolgirl into a car and raped her for 12 hours will carry on without any fear of apprehension.

"They're all loaded." "They've got really nice houses in the suburbs." How many times have we all heard comments like this about beggars or *Big Issue* sellers? Almost as often as the scummy old *Sun* has attempted to deny the legacy of Thatcher's Britain by trying to tell us that anyone we think is poor or desperate is in fact having a great life and taking the piss out of hard-working people into the bargain. Obviously it's easier for those *Sun* readers with consciences (a contradiction in terms, I grant you) to salve them by believing this sort of cack, rather than facing up to the fact that the rag they read/look at played a very big part in creating this rotten, yobbish, paranoid and selfish culture we have ended up with. As far as I'm concerned, any poor bugger who has the bottle to stand out on the street and face the "great" British public every day, deserves a fortune.

I'm on tour at the moment, and after receiving a couple of letters from Hope House in Oswestry, a respite hospice for children, I dropped in to see them and say hello. I must admit I was a bit anxious, as I had never visited a place like this before and was worried that the atmosphere would be oppressive and sad. However, I found a delightful place full of warm and humorous staff who were obviously good at their jobs and doing their best for a group of children with very different problems, a place you would think the health authority might be proud of. But Hope House is funded entirely by charity, despite the fact that the health authority pokes its nose in on a regular basis and uses the facility when it needs help. This great place, struggling to meet the bill of more than a million pounds a year with charitable donations, is just another example of the way in which this government has cut health care to the bone and evaded its responsibilities. Still, I suppose it leaves some dosh over for performance-related bonuses for managers in the health service.

On tour, one gets to sit in a strange selection of hotel bars, and sometimes we play "Guess what the group at the other table do for a living". Sitting in a country hotel in Wales the other night and catching snatches of conversation from another table, we decided it was possible they were coppers of some kind. At one point the most senior member of the group, age-wise, got up from the table, walked towards the door, turned back to his group and said in a voice loud enough for us to hear, "Where are the shooters?" Suddenly we were all transported back to the Seventies and felt like extras in *The Sweeney*. Now, it's possible they were winding us up, but there was absolutely no evidence of it. I'll let you know if we see them driving through some cardboard boxes, or hear them shouting "You're going dahn!" at breakfast.

هكذا من الاصل

Shame on you!

If we are to be a classless society, shaming tactics must apply to all

david aaronovitch

For many moons a cuddly, bibulous right-winger called Digby Anderson has been trying to reintroduce shame into our shameless society. Once every year, as regularly as the first cuckoo of summer, the director of the Social Affairs Unit (I am not sure that the unit has any other officers) writes an article in a middle-ranging tabloid arguing for stigma and ostracism to become weapons once more in the battle against social disintegration. But apart from the leader writer of the *Daily Mail*, few have been prepared to support Digby's crusade.

Dr Anderson's lack of success may have something to do with the nature of his targets. Homosexuals and illegitimate children are odd choices, given the murderous activities of many heterosexuals and boys born safely within the bounds of wedlock. There is nothing wrong with poofs and bastards, as long as they behave themselves.

So we must give a cautious welcome to Mrs Margaret Mervis, Tory chair of the London borough of Wandsworth's Housing Committee, who this week published a list of the names of anti-social council tenants, guilty of such crimes as allowing their dogs to foul the public footpath. The list was sent out to be published in local newspapers and you can get hold of a copy yourself (should you want to see if any friends or acquaintances are on it) by applying directly to the Town Hall.

There will, of course, be the usual bleating by civil liberties groups about victimisation and human rights (though, typically, they remain silent about the human right to walk free from the fear of stepping in something unpleasant), and we can also expect – human nature being what it is – that some innocent tenants will appear on the list by mistake. But, as Mrs Mervis (who has also advocated identity cards for tenants and a municipal police force) rightly says, "It's no good talking tough about crime and anti-social behaviour if you are not prepared to back this up with action." Quite so, Maggy! Let the villains tremble!

But before we get carried away by our admiration of the Magnificent Mervis, there are some harsh questions to be asked. The first is whether the simple publication of a name in a local, low circulation newspaper is enough. Is there not a significant danger that many citizens (who may not be readers of the local rag) will miss the list? What proportion of the offenders are likely to know what is in the papers anyway? It seems to me that this method is both too distant from the crime and the perpetrator, while – paradoxically – reaching too few people.

Let us take the example of a yobbo pensioner who repeatedly allows her Jack Russell to defecate on the pavement. She may suffer from arthritis, or poor sight, and thus be most unwilling to do her duty in terms of scooping. It is going to take a pretty powerful incentive to get her to behave in a less antisocial way. But just imagine that she were forced to stand next to the offending pile for a full day, wearing a placard with the words "All My Own Work" – a photograph appearing in the paper, and pictures carried on the regional television news. Most pensioners I know would rather have their dogs put down immediately, than run the risk of such humiliation.

My second point is similarly substantial: why limit this public shaming to council tenants? I am sure (as Mrs Mervis seems to imply) that such people are less law-abiding than the rest of us, otherwise why do they not own their own homes? But I know some pretty anti-social home-owners and private tenants too; they also fail to return library books, do not rewind rented video tapes, allow their hanging-baskets to die of thirst in August and park their Mercs on the pavement. Surely, for a shaming strategy to work and be effective it must be seen to apply to all, from the dregs of society to its cream. Remember the classless society, Margaret?

The man who built a bridge to the past

Bob Dole's heart's desire was a presidential nomination. But when he finally got it, America found he could only look backwards, writes Sidney Blumenthal

If anyone today can rightfully claim to be called "Mr Republican," it is Robert J Dole. He has spent his entire adult life in the grinding service of the Grand Old Party. His slow, uneven ascent consumed decades – rising up the political ladder rung by rung, from congressman to senator, from chairman of the Republican National Committee to failed vice presidential candidate, from failed presidential hopeful (twice before his current effort) to Senate majority leader Everything Dole has, he has earned, including his impending defeat.

Dole's career has confirmed his grimly determined view of the world. Without his entourage of handlers and speechwriters to craft his image and language, Dole naturally reverts to the rhetoric of his harsh past, bitterly informed by his wartime wound (an injury which paralysed his right arm). Dole insists that the only way to get ahead is "the hard way" and that "pain" is the true path to understanding. His underlying message is the opposite of Ronald Reagan's, the avatar of pleasure and easy street. Dole's projection of Kansas is a world away from Reagan's political Disneyland. For Dole, life is nasty, brutish and agonisingly long. His presidential campaign, if nothing else, should once again confirm his bleak conviction.

In 1996 his message has been the one that he feels in the marrow of his bones and conveys with his whole being: it's his turn. Within the Republican Party, which is far more hierarchical and deferential than the Democratic Party, the notion that Dole has deserved the presidential nomination after so many years of hard labour carried some weight in the primaries. And virtually all of the party establishment supported his effort. But once Dole actually had the coveted nomination in his hand, he lacked a larger message to communicate to the country.

He had sought the prize for so long that the struggle to get it had almost completely taken him over. Dole's insistent belief in his own entitlement left him bereft at the moment of his triumph. He had little else to add. His quandary was that the party had finally bestowed its ultimate honour on him, but that the voters were unimpressed. "Mr Republican" was not an identity that held much attraction for them.

"I'll be Ronald Reagan if you want me to be," Dole implored at the start of the campaign. Unfortunately no one is more unlike Reagan than Dole. In fact, from the enactment of Reagan's supply-side tax cut, Senator Dole was among the leaders in trying to contain the explosion of the federal deficit with countervailing tax increases. He made constant sardonic jokes about the foolishness of supply-side economics. His favourite was this: "There's good news and bad news. The good news is that a bus full of supply-side economists just went off a cliff. The bad news is that there was an empty seat." Dole particularly ridiculed that champion of tax cuts, Congressman Jack Kemp, as having played football "without a helmet" and seeking a tax cut for "hair spray". Dole's deficit obsession reflected his agrarian sensibility, which he was certain was the real essence of Republicanism. As far as he was concerned, Reaganism was a perverse aberration, another oddity emanating from the freakish state of California.

Immediately after securing his nomination, Dole returned to the Senate, his true home, an insulating cocoon. He acted as though, having finally achieved his ultimate goal, he would be treated with the proper respect. After all, didn't he deserve the nomination? Wasn't it his turn? But Dole could not be both the Senate majority leader and the Republican presidential candidate simultaneously. The more he was pushed to oppose the Democrats on popular measures, the more his standing in the polls plunged.

Dole began discarding the elements of his basic political character. First he resigned from the Senate. In his farewell address, he stifled his sobs as he spoke of becoming "just a man". Then he embraced the supply-side tax cut programme, in effect repudiating the single position he had consistently held over the years. Shortly after that, he named Jack Kemp, an object of his derision, as his vice presidential running-mate. He had given up most of his identity and was indeed "just a man", an exposed and vulnerable one.

In his convention speech, Dole was a candidate in search of a metaphor. Without a smile, he described himself as "the most optimistic man in America". He offered himself as a "bridge" to the past, a better world that lay behind us, that only disbelievers called "myth". With that, Dole had handed President Clinton a blunt weapon. At the Democratic convention, the President lambasted Dole for trying to lead the country backward and promised instead to build "a bridge to the 21st century". In just one rhetorical trope, Clinton claimed control of the future, leaving Dole flailing as yesterday's man.

In the closing days of his political career, Dole inadvertently began assuming a new political identity: Republican Party scapegoat. All the failings of the party in 1996 are blamed by Republicans of every stripe on "Mr Republican". Every faction argues that if only he had pursued their line from the beginning, he would have won, or at least finished respectably. The social conservatives and members of the religious right, the supply-siders and the party officials have all found a last use for Dole as the convenient excuse for losing. He is an icon of their denial.

All along, Dole's true model, his hero, has not been Ronald Reagan, but Richard Nixon. The two men had a tangled love-hate relationship, with each drawn magnetically to the other's darkness.

Before he died, Nixon wrote Dole a series of letters spelling out the strategy he ought to pursue. He advised Dole to move to the right to win the nomination and then shift back to the centre to win the presidency. One approach was aimed at the party, the other at the nation. It was the strategy that Nixon, who always played each against all for his own benefit, had followed himself. His advice, in brief, was that to succeed Dole must be Nixon.

Dole tried to adhere to Nixon's plan, but the old balancing act in the middle could not be sustained. The problem for Dole was that the Republican Party had changed since Nixon's day. It had moved far more to the right. It was more Reagan's and Gingrich's party than Nixon's. Dole could not hold it together and pretend he was standing anywhere near an atrophied party centre. His march to the right continued up to election day.

In winning his heart's desire, his party's nomination, Dole shut himself out of the White House. Dole could not be Reagan and he could not be Nixon. The roles were not available: they had been removed to presidential libraries and museums. Shifting endlessly to satisfy a right wing that can never be truly satisfied, he could not even present himself convincingly as Bob Dole. Being "Mr Republican", as it happens, is a self-defeating proposition.

The writer is on the staff of 'The New Yorker' magazine.

When Jon Snow told his family secrets

"Boys, there's something I think you ought to know about your mother." As so often, my father was talking to the rear-view mirror of his beloved 1931 Hudson Terraplane Eight. His three sons were arrayed on the back seat in matching pale blue cable-stitch mother-knitted sweaters. She was sitting with her back to us in the front seat. There was a long pause as he negotiated the huge, convertible round another Dorset bend too fast. "Your mother doesn't have her own hair," he said finally.

The silence that followed was eventually broken by my elder brother snootily announcing, "I knew that." But I didn't, and at eight years old I was utterly shattered. I simply couldn't begin to make sense of it. "Didn't you even know, Jobby?" My eldest brother, using the sneering nickname by which he got under my skin, clearly sensed my shock. "I've always known," he+ added. My younger brother, at six, was reticent about being seen to be as candid as my tears began to reveal me to be, or as cocky as his eldest brother now boasted.

"Yes, darlings, I haven't had any hair since I was a girl," chimed my mother. "Your father was absolutely wonderful ever to marry me." So, I thought, this hairlessness had been a most terrible and unmentionable thing. And, curiously, right up until adult life it was to remain a most terrible and unmentionable thing."

Intimate revelations about mother-son relationships are the stuff that great feuds are made of, says Paul Vallely

The author is the Channel 4 news-reader Jon Snow. And the row he has provoked in writing a memoir of his boyhood relationship with his mother has been of the peculiar intensity which only a family spat can conjure.

Mrs Snow, it seems, suffered from *alopecia totalis*. At the age of 13 she lost her hair in a night while waiting to sit a piano exam. And that was that.

"But for me it wasn't," Snow recalls. "Very suddenly Mummy wasn't quite the same Mummy... I'd never for one moment wondered whether the hair on her head was real. I had taken it on absolute trust that it was. That it now wasn't, somehow undermined my entire confidence in who she was."

His elder brother Tom apparently remains the snooty fellow of the back seat. Instead of upbraiding his younger sibling direct he wrote a letter to *The Guardian* announcing that he was "shocked" to see that Jobby was blaming their mother for his inability to form close relationships. "She is severely ill with Alzheimer's disease," he wrote. "She is therefore, quite literally, defenceless in the face of such ghastly public retribution."

She developed the dementia after their father, a former Bishop of Whitby, died in retirement. She now lives in a nursing home in Oxfordshire where she has no idea her son is a television celebrity. "It is a horrible disease because she is still physically your mum. She sounds like her, but you can't have a conversation with her," he said of his visits every three weeks in an interview several years ago.

Yet there was always something curiously detached in their relationship, according to his essay in *Sons and Mothers*, which is to be published next week. While his brothers gravitated towards their father, who was a bishop and a do-it-yourself enthusiast, the boy Jon was drawn into his mother's orbit. His beautifully written lyrical account of those early years – in which he turned the pages of her piano music as the engagement ring on her long, slender fingers clicked on the ivory keys – is a haunting tale of a deep attraction that was somehow never resolved. His unsatisfied yearning for a closer relationship with the mother who called him the daughter she never had is unbearably poignant.

Physical closeness was what was lacking. "Nanny would wash our hair on Fridays and we would lie on towels in front of the fierce glowing elements of the old-fashioned gas fire in my mother's bedroom. These were the very rare occasions when we were allowed into her room. She would be there, too, sitting close by, sometimes assisting the drying with a towel. Beyond those treasured moments in front of the gas fire, I have no memory of any other tactile life with her. I did not sit on her lap, nor even run my fingers through her hair, as my children do mine. Kisses were an endurance – perfunctory, charged with nothing. And yet I was conscious of being the apple of her eye."

She found it hard to demonstrate emotionally. On his first day at Winchester choir school his mother left without saying goodbye. "In that instant the heart-broken, bereft but independent new me was born," he writes. "The umbilical was finally broken." She had also left him with a "pathological fear" of close relationships with women.

When her Alzheimer's deteriorated five years ago, to the point where she had to be moved into full-time care, he felt unable to take her into his own home. "Perhaps if our life together had prepared us and left us with a living friendship, I might have tried. But as it had not I was ruthless in my refusal to make sacrifices to care for her."

Brother Tom has no sympathy with the emotional charge his famous brother loads on his recollections. "I cannot see how anything in his childhood can now justify the humiliation of our mother, whose memory of those times has been wiped out," he wrote. "It is simply pitiless. Self-indulgence has gained the upper hand over decency."

Vehement disagreement seems of the essence in such matters. *Sons and Mothers* has been jointly edited by the critic Victoria Glendinning and her sportswriter son Matthew. They wrote pieces for the book about each other and managed to fall out in the process.

Matthew was horrified when his mother pushed the first draft of her contribution through his letterbox. "I thought, 'Why are you writing all this down and not saying it to me?' ... It was so negative," he says. It took a month to sort out the anger. The experience of editing with her had been "extremely weird", he says, and it has definitely changed their relationship.

Quite what will be the impact on the Snow brothers is unclear. "I probably see my brothers only once or twice a year." Jon said in an interview published last year. "We are a pretty distant family. It's a great pity but you can't artificially engineer these things." Yet he apparently hopes that his brother won't find what he has written quite so abominable once he reads the whole book.

"It is not easy to tell the truth – the truth, that is, as one sees it, for there is no such thing as a single, whole truth," wrote Victoria Glendinning yesterday in response to the Snow furore. "It is all subjective. That is the tragedy of family life. It is also the comedy and farce of family life." Which side of that coin eventually lands face-up for the Snow brothers remains to be seen. Perhaps they will decide it would be best to keep it in the family.

'Sons and Mothers', edited by Victoria and Matthew Glendinning, is published by Virago on 7 Nov at £16.99.

business & city

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Majority of advisers urge against tax cuts

Peter Rodgers
Financial Editor

Five of the Government's six independent economic advisers – the "wise persons" – yesterday attempted to persuade the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, not to indulge in a pre-election Budget tax give-away.

All but Professor Patrick Minford of Liverpool University were against substantial tax cuts, and two proposed an immediate fiscal tightening in their pre-Budget advice to Mr Clarke, because of the speed with which the economy is growing.

This contrasts with the widespread view in the City that the Chancellor is preparing to give away £2bn-£3bn in tax cuts to appease anxious backbenchers, probably with 1p off income tax. Some of the panel believe this will happen despite their advice.

The panel's belief that the economy is already growing at a spanking pace and does not need further help was reinforced by the latest purchasing managers' index which rose to an 18-month high in October, the fifth consecutive monthly increase.

The rise from 53.5 in September to 54.5 in October contrasts with subdued indications of manufacturing growth from official statistics. HSBC James Capel said the survey was further justification for this week's rise in interest rates.

Further evidence of a buoyant economy in the run-up to the election came from the Nationwide monthly index of house prices, which rose 0.8 per cent, after seasonal adjustment, between September and October, leaving prices 7.9 per cent higher than a year earlier, the highest annual rate since the recovery began.

A year ago Nationwide said house prices were falling at an annual rate of 3.9 per cent.

Philip Williamson, Nationwide marketing director, said rising prices were "at last being complemented by a stronger trend in house sales". He added that the housing recovery had much further to go.

The report by the Chancellor's independent advisers had little impact on the markets because of the six economists' lack of consensus on the outlook, although they came nearest to agreement on fiscal policy.

In the City some economists claimed after the interest rate cut on Wednesday that the Chancellor was backing the Bank of England's demands for higher interest rates for political reasons, to make it easier to reduce taxes.

Professor Minford called for £4bn in cuts, including 2p off the standard rate of income tax to 22p in the pound. The other five members of the panel recommended varying degrees of tightness in Budget decisions on taxes and public spending.

Kate Barker, of the Confederation of British Industry, said employers wanted tax reductions of at most £1bn and arguably nil. The emphasis should be on cuts in company rather than personal taxes, she added.

Professor Tim Congdon, of Lombard Street Research, called for a combination of tax increases and perhaps public spending cuts to reduce government borrowing.

Martin Weale, of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, said there was no reason tax increases rather than reductions should lead to a slowdown in economic activity.

On interest rates, which Mr Clarke raised on Wednesday, the panel is divided. While Professor Minford would like to see modest interest rate cuts to ensure that the economic recovery continues, two others argue for higher rates for the Government to meet its inflation target, and the other three say they would not recommend any immediate change.

Television wars: Satellite giant marches relentlessly on as a change in the rules spells further consolidation in the sector

BSkyB 'on course for Warner deal'

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

BSkyB yesterday vigorously denied claims that it had indefinitely postponed the UK launch of the Warner Channel after pressure from Rupert Murdoch, the satellite channel's 40 per cent shareholder.

Gerry Robinson, chairman of BSkyB, insisted that the decision had been entirely a commercial one taken by the company itself and claimed a deal with Warner could soon be signed.

"We continue to be in discussions with them and we expect a satisfactory outcome," he said after BSkyB's annual meeting yesterday.

On Thursday night the group made the surprise announcement that the Warner Channel would not be appearing yesterday, even though the US company had advertised a 1 November launch around the UK. Warner Channel, part of Ted Turner's Time Warner empire, would offer a selection of cartoons including Bugs Bunny and a range of old films.

Sources close to BSkyB claimed the delay had been caused by arguments over the price of the channel, rather than the long-running and public feud in the US between Mr Murdoch and Mr Turner.

Mr Murdoch, a BSkyB director, was noticeably absent from the podium at the agm in London, though his daughter, Elisabeth, also a BSkyB executive though not on the board, was in the audience.

This latest twist in the saga of Mr Murdoch's tightening grip on the pay-television market emerged as BSkyB released figures showing growth continued to exceed expectations.

Pre-tax profits soared by 31 per cent, from £51m to £66m in the three months to the end of September against forecasts of around £60m, while turnover jumped by 24 per cent to £266m. Earnings per share increased by 30 per cent, to 3.9p.

There was a net increase of 146,000 new subscribers during the period, taking the total number of paying customers in the UK and the Irish Republic to 5.65 million, of which 3.3 million used satellite dishes and 1.87 million received BSkyB through local cable companies.

'Deal on the way': Gerry Robinson, chairman of BSkyB, insisted that the decision had been an entirely commercial one

The group also disclosed that it is considering further investments in Germany in addition to the 49 per cent stake in DF1, the digital television transmission platform in July.

The results did little to bolster the company's flagging share price which has fallen sharply on news that Mr Murdoch was considering using his stake as collateral to raise $1bn in a convertible share issue to fund future media projects. Shares in BSkyB fell 9.5p to close at 569p.

Asked by one small shareholder at the AGM whether Mr Murdoch intended to go ahead with the controversial arrangement, which was apparently postponed pending yesterday's quarterly results, Mr Robinson replied: "Nothing has been finalised on that ... we at BskyB have no influence over that."

The board also managed to fend off a shareholder revolt over a resolution that would prevent two directors from ever having to be re-elected to the board in future. Both Jerome Seydoux and Michel Crepon were re-appointed under the controversial formula which also applies to other directors after Mr Robinson announced that shareholders accounting for 96 per cent of the company had voted in favour.

One investor, John McCallum from the West Midlands Pension Fund said the provisions were "so banal they are unbelievable".

PIA bid to gag critics attacked

Nic Cicutti

The Personal Investment Authority, the financial regulator, yesterday came under attack over its moves to gag critics of its pension transfer review. The PIA has ordered an inquiry into a leak of figures to the *Independent* that showed barely any redress had so far been paid to victims.

The regulator announced that it intended to appoint "an independent person of stature" to carry out the inquiry. A spokesman said the PIA took the leak "extremely seriously".

The figures, presented to a PIA board meeting earlier this month, show that redress has been offered in barely 2,500 cases, out of 360,000 identified as priorities.

However, the PIA's plans for a mole-hunt were attacked by consumer groups, who claimed its time would be better spent ensuring that victims of the pension transfer scandal received swift redress.

In addition one senior regulator, who declined to be named, said he was "baffled" by the move: "It could be argued that criticism is acceptable but leakage is not. But how do you criticise anything if you don't have the figures first?"

The PIA announcement came as new evidence mounted of more delays faced by those wrongly advised to buy a personal pension and transfer occupational scheme funds into it.

Sources said a decision by the Securities and Investments Board, the senior City regulator, to try to kick-start the faltering review process had been caused by new figures showing very low response rates to insurers' inquiries by their clients.

In the document obtained by the *Independent* earlier this week, this varied between more than 75 per cent for Barclays Life to less than 50 per cent for Norwich Union.

It is now believed that these figures relate to the first letter sent to clients, in which they are simply asked to indicate their willingness to take part in the review. A second mailing, which contains a detailed questionnaire for individuals to complete, is said to be achieving a far lower response rate.

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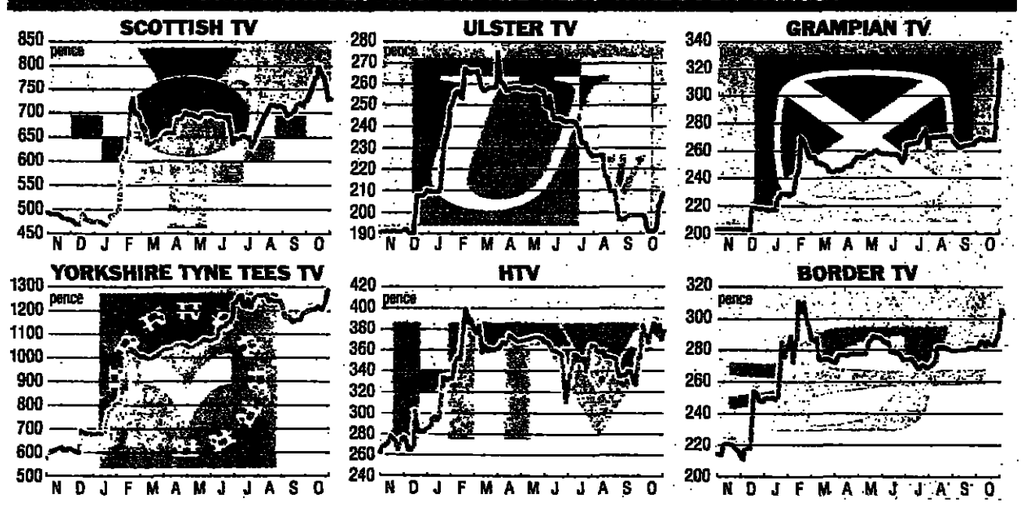
TUNING IN: BETTING ON THE NEXT TAKEOVER TARGET



United News & Media snaps up HTV option

Tom Stevenson
City Editor

United News & Media fired the starting gun yesterday on the long-awaited next-round consolidation of Britain's commercial television sector. As expected, it exercised an option to buy a 20 per cent stake in Welsh ITV contractor HTV on the first day of new industry ownership regulations.

United bought the stake from Scottish Television on the day the Government eased regulations that for the first time allow companies to control more than two ITV licences. Provided a single company does not control more than 15 per cent of the total television audience in the UK it is now free to own as many franchises as it wishes.

Following the exercise of its call option at 420p, United said yesterday it had no plans to make a full offer for the whole of HTV. The stake was only an investment, the company said.

That has not stopped shares in a handful of television companies rising sharply recently in anticipation of further bid action in the sector. Favourites to be snapped up in the expected carve-up include Yorkshire-Tyne Tees, up 15p to 1,282.5p yesterday and more than twice their level a year ago. Others on the block are Grampian, Border, Westcountry and Scottish.

Dealers continue to expect takeover action despite many analysts believing share prices are unsustainably high after recent strong runs. HTV, which closed unchanged last night at 378.5p, is worth over £330m while Yorkshire, which Granada is thought to be circling, could fetch as much as £800m.

United's move on HTV is expected to prompt a response from Michael Green's Carlton Communications.

32 arrested over $2m Amex card fraud

Jill Treanor
Banking Correspondent

Four people have been arrested in London in connection with an alleged $2m credit card scam at American Express. Investigators in the US believe they have cracked an international Nigerian organised crime ring.

In total, 32 people were arrested after American Express alerted the US authorities to its suspicions of fraudulent activity by two employees.

Most of the arrests, which followed a five-month investigation, were in North America after a swoop in several US cities, Montreal and London.

US investigators suspect that the two employees were tapping into the company's computer system and giving confidential information about customers to accomplices across the US, Canada and the UK.

A Scotland Yard spokesman said yesterday that two men and two women had been arrested under section seven of the Forgery and Conterfeiting Act 1991.

"As part of a joint operation between the Metropolitan Police and law enforcement agencies throughout the US, six search warrants were executed at addresses in London," the spokesman said.

He declined to disclose the identities or the nationalities of the four people arrested but said the inquiries were in connection with counterfeit credit cards.

The four have been released on police bail until 15 January pending further investigations.

The allegations of fraud affected 37 American Express accounts in the US. American Express said it had protected the accounts and reissued cards.

"By working closely with the Secret Service to isolate and monitor the activities of these employees, we were able to help an investigation that has made an important impact on a fraud ring operating within the card industry and minimise any future activity at American Express or elsewhere," American Express said in a statement.

In Washington, the US Treasury Department said the 32 people arrested were indicted for conspiracy to commit access device fraud and wire fraud.

Searches had produced many American Express credit cards and credit histories of American Express customers, cash and forged documents, the Treasury Department said.

Sainsbury steps up Tesco assault

Nigel Cope

Sainsbury's is stepping up its attack on Tesco with a new promotional programme for its loyalty card. From tomorrow Sainsbury's is giving away extra points on a range of more than 200 products.

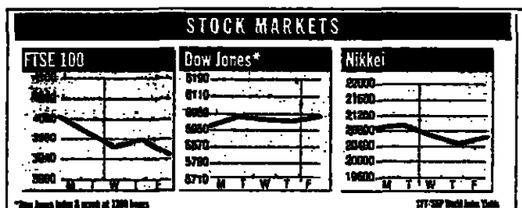
Customers can claim the points on their Reward card. These can either be redeemed against future shopping bills or doubled if spent on Sainsbury's offers with BT, Beefeater, Sketchley or TGI Friday's.

Products listed in the promotion include Nescafé coffee, Tetley tea bags, and Heinz soups. Sainsbury's claims that a family spending £75 a week would earn enough Air Miles points to qualify for four flights to Paris within a month. Kevin McCarten, marketing director, claimed the development made Sainsbury's card the best in the sector.

The move comes in the same week as Sainsbury's announced a 14 per cent drop in first-half profits to £393m together with disappointing sales figures. Last week it announced plans for a new Sainsbury's Bank which will start operating in the new year. The move is part of an attempt to wrest the marketing initiative away from rivals Tesco and Asda.

Safeway responded with an initiative of a different sort. It is pioneering the cause of the British-produced baked bean. From Monday more than 350,000 tins of Safeway British baked beans will hit the shelves. Safeway claims that a switch to UK production could save Britain £40m a year in imports.

STOCK MARKETS

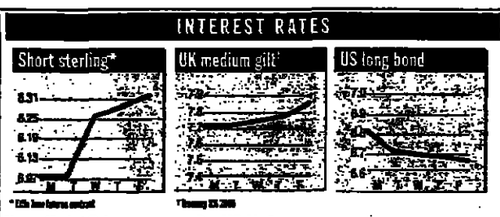


Indices

Index	Close	Day's change	Change(%)	1996 High	1996 Low	Yield(%)
FTSE 100	3948.50	-30.60	-0.8	4073.10	3632.30	3.97
FTSE 250	4429.20	+6.70	+0.2	4568.60	4015.30	3.52
FTSE 350	1971.40	-11.30	-0.6	2022.10	1816.60	3.87
FTSE SmallCap	2167.41	-0.58	-0.0	2244.36	1954.06	3.14
FTSE All-Share	1946.55	-10.35	-0.5	1994.54	1791.95	3.82
New York *	6018.95	-10.43	-0.2	6094.23	5032.94	2.15
Tokyo	20633.06	+166.20	+0.8	22666.80	19734.70	0.78†
Hong Kong	12529.27	+51.71	+0.4	12529.27	10204.87	3.31†
Frankfurt	2683.25	+24.00	+0.9	2734.82	2253.36	1.75†

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES



Money Market Rates

Index	1 Month	1 Year
UK	6.09	6.69
US	5.38	5.59
Japan	0.47	0.50
Germany	3.06	3.31

Bond Yields *

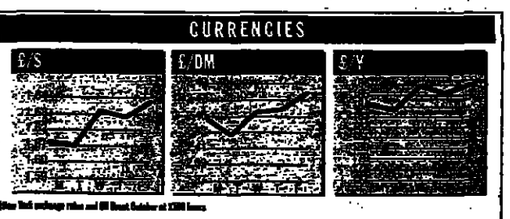
Medium Bond (%)	Year Ago	Long Bond	(%) Year Ago
7.70	7.90	7.81	8.02
6.35	5.92	6.66	6.26
2.52	-	-	-
6.02	6.44	6.85	-

*Benchmark indices

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Price (p)	Change (p)	Change(%)	Falls	Price (p)	Change (p)	% Change
CRT Group	272.5	13	5.0	Lasmo	207	7	3.3
Johnston Press	183.5	8	4.6	Enterprise Oil	540.5	16	2.9
Airtours	682.5	29.5	4.5	Shell Trnspt&Trdg	980	27.5	2.7

CURRENCIES



Pound

	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago
$ (London)	1.6376	+0.92c	1.5805
$ (N York)‡	1.6380	0.49	1.5799
DM (London)	2.4833	+1.92pf	2.2364
¥ (London)	186.009	+Y0.795	163.780
£ Index	90.9	+0.7	84.3

Dollar

	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago
£ (London)	0.6106	-0.004	0.6327
£ (N York)‡	0.6105	-0.017	0.6330
DM (London)	1.5165	+0.33pf	1.4155
¥ (London)	113.590	-Y0.15	103.665
$ Index	97.0	-0.10	94.3

OTHER INDICATORS

	Yesterday	Day's chg	Year Ago
Oil Brent $	22.70	-1.11	16.63
Gold $	377.95	-1.85	382.60
Gold £	230.80	-3.15	242.19

	Index	Latest	Yr Ago	Next Figs
RPI	153.8	+2.12pc	150.6	14 Nov
GDP	106.9	+2.3pc	105.7	Jan 27
Base Rates	—	6.00pc	6.75	—

Heavy trading marks New Holland debut

Michael Harrison

Nearly 10 per cent of the shares in New Holland, the British-based tractor manufacturer, changed hands yesterday as trading began in New York following its $3.22bn (£2bn) flotation by parent company Fiat of Italy.

In early trading the stock fell from the issue price of $21.50 to $21.12 as more than 12 million shares were traded.

Fiat, which formed New Holland in 1991 after taking over Ford's tractor business based at Basildon, Essex, sold 46.5 million shares representing 31 per cent of the company, raising just short of $1bn. The shares were priced in the middle of the indicated $20-$23 range.

New Holland is the biggest tractor manufacturer in Europe and the third-biggest in the US after John Deere and Case. It employs 19,000 world-wide, of which 2,400 are in Britain.

In addition to the Basildon plant, New Holland has its headquarters in Brentford, west London.

Last year the company made net profits of $258m on sales of $5bn.

Who is holding the City watchdog's leash?

JEREMY WARNER

'The PIA is subject to powerful two-way pulls. On the one hand there is the industry with its vested interest in presenting matters in the best possible light; on the other are the people for whose benefit the PIA is meant to exist'

The trouble with the Personal Investment Authority, the City watchdog, is that you never quite know who's in the driving seat. Is it Britain's army of savers, whose interests it is there to protect, or is it the savings industry that funds it and still accounts for nearly half its board of directors?

The question seems worth asking again because of last week's leak to the *Independent* of confidential PIA papers demonstrating the industry's shameful record in dealing with the pensions transfer scandal. Of the more than 360,000 priority cases identified, the industry has assessed less than 10,000, or under 3 per cent. The record is even worse for some household names. The Pru, with the highest number of priority cases at 41,000, has processed only 10.

But for the leak, these figures would probably have remained buried behind a legal wall of confidentiality, for despite pressure for publication as part of a "name and shame" policy by elements within the PIA, it was decided to keep the statistics under wraps. Now you have to understand that this was a decision taken entirely on legal grounds. It was nothing to do with the fact that the industry didn't want to see the list published. No siree. Actually the reason was that if the PIA published them, it would be open to legal action from life assurers wishing to challenge the validity of the figures. Er, yup. Well it convinces me anyway.

Apparently not everyone, however, for the figures leaked. Colette Bowe, the PIA's chief executive, has reacted by ordering the appointment of "an independent person of stature" to investigate this "extremely serious breach of confidentiality". Ms Bowe, an accomplished operator in a difficult job, knows a thing or two about leaking. It was she who, as head of press at the Department of Trade and Industry during the Westland affair, famously leaked the solicitor general's letter, culminating ultimately in the resignation of both Leon Brittan and Michael Heseltine from the Cabinet.

Admittedly she was only the conduit for a leak ordered by others, but presumably the experience was good tutoring in the arts of spin doctory. It might even be suspected that she is the source of the leak in this case, were it not for the fact it would be unthinkable for a chief executive to engage in double-dealing of this sort. No wonder she has to be seen to be vigilant in hunting the mole.

The point remains the same, none the less. The PIA is subject to powerful two-way pulls. On the one hand there is the industry with its vested interest in presenting matters in the best possible light; on the other are the people for whose benefit the PIA is meant to exist, in this case those who were misled into buying an inappropriate pension. For them, publication, albeit by the unorthodox route of an unofficial leak, is the best thing that could have happened. This affair has been dragging on for the best part of the decade. Meanwhile the industry has done its level best first to deny the problem and then sit on it. Paralysis seems to grip all concerned. At the present rate of progress, many victims will be dead by the time compensation is agreed.

To be fair on the PIA, it is not quite as much the industry's creature as might be supposed. Despite its connections with the industry, it is no longer really a self-regulatory organisation. Its authority is a statutory one derived from the Securities and Investments Board and certainly it thinks of itself as an entirely independent organisation. While its chairman, Joe Palmer, was chief executive of Legal and General at the time all those pensions were mis-sold, he's now very much a poacher-turned-gamekeeper figure. Ms Bowe herself is nobody's poodle.

All the same, the PIA remains too close to the industry it regulates. Every time anything contentious crops up, this fundamental conflict of interest shows up in sharp relief. Reform should be a priority for whoever forms the next government.

You begin almost to feel sorry for the poor old Pru. The PIA figures exposing it as the worst offender in dealing with the pensions mis-selling scandal follow hard on the heels of an equally alarming league table which shows that it offers particularly poor value to its clients on life and pension products.

In terms of investment performance, most of the big life assurers are all much of a muchness. They vary a bit from year to year, but over the long run they all generate roughly the same returns.

The difference is accounted for largely by administrative costs and charges. On this front the Pru scores particularly highly. This is partly because it is a proprietary company, and must pay some of the profits generated in the life fund to outside shareholders. But it is also because costs are just simply too high.

Curiously, neither of these two things seems so far to have affected the company's ability to sell, even though industry specialists have been vaguely aware of them for some years now. Last year the Pru took more new annualised premium income than anyone else. This year it is still running Equitable Life a close second. The power of brand and marketing is a mighty powerful thing, it would seem.

It may not last though. The public is slowly becoming more savvy in these things. It is still possible for a clever life assurance salesman to sell his client a pup but it is not nearly as easy as it was. Furthermore, reaction to adverse publicity is nearly always a delayed one. The sales figures may look all right at the moment, but two or three years down the line things could be very different. Peter Davis, the Pru's now not-so-new chief executive, would be well advised to spend less time dreaming up grand acquisition and banking strategies and more on setting his present house in order.

The Labour Party is getting its knickers in the most frightful twist over the windfall profits tax. This is the Labour Party's only revenue-raising tax proposal thus far, so come hell or high water, there is no question of it being dropped.

The difficulty comes in deciding how the tax should be levied. Whichever method is chosen, it is going to be unfair, so Goldman Sachs, which is developing an unhealthily close relationship with New Labour, has devised a way (gratis) for Mr Blair which it considers least unfair. The idea is that all privatised companies should pay about 15 per cent on any return made by shareholders over and above the stock market average. Simple.

There is an obvious flaw, however. The effect is to tax present shareholders, many of whom will be new to the company and won't therefore have benefited from the windfall gains. If Goldman Sachs cannot come up with a way that is fair on the capitalist system it makes so much money out of, then it should not be trying at all.

Mid Kent takes final stand against 'vultures'

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Directors of Mid Kent Water, one of the 19 smaller drinking water companies, are preparing a last-ditch attempt to persuade the Monopolies and Mergers Commission to block a takeover jointly launched by two French companies, Saur and General Utilities.

Ten months after the bid was first announced, the simmering feud between the two sides has boiled over into a furious public row as Mid Kent mounted a high-profile public campaign against what it claims is an "arrogant and hostile" carve up of a defenceless British company by French aggressors.

At a formal hearing on Monday before the MMC panel, Geoff Baldwin, Mid Kent's chairman and chief executive, will claim Saur and General Utilities, which each own 19.5 per cent stakes in the Maidstone-based company, have effectively already merged their interests.

Evidence for the complaint revolves around the behaviour of the two French conglomerates at Mid Kent's annual general meeting in July, where Mr Baldwin claims they combined to vote down several board resolutions, including an executive bonus scheme. Allegations that the two firms acted in concert are thought to have persuaded the MMC to extend its investigation into the takeover from 30 September to 9 December.

"For the first time they came along and voted together," explained Mr Baldwin. "What concerns me now is that I've appointed a new director and I'm unable to offer a suitable executive share plan because of what happened at the AGM."

The response of Peter Darby, managing director of General Utilities-owned Folkestone and Dover Water Services, gives a taste of how bad relations with his neighbour have become. "It's absolute nonsense and we've given the MMC our evidence about his claim. There was absolutely no collusion between us and Saur."

However, as the MMC probe enters its final furlong, there are growing signs that Mid Kent's campaign may have backfired. Unions have backed the bid on the grounds that Mid Kent staff would be more secure under French control.

Worse still, there are fears that the advertising campaign, complete with French vultures preying on a noble British stallion, may have offended as many people as it attracted. Stunts have included trailing a banner from a light aircraft outside the Liberal Democrats' partly conference in Brighton.

Mr Darby claimed he was horrified by Mr Baldwin's campaign and had made formal complaints to the MMC and the Takeover Panel. "He's put out some appalling stuff about the French. For a county which does so much trade with France it is very damaging."

At the heart of the debate is the long-term future of water resources in the South-east, a region in the throes of a severe water shortage.

Saur, which owns South East Water to the west, and General Utilities have pledged to build a water grid across Kent at a cost of £19m without raising bills beyond price limits set by the industry watchdog, Ofwat.

Both French-owned companies have had increasingly stringent restrictions on demand, including the free installation of meters for customers and hosepipe bans.

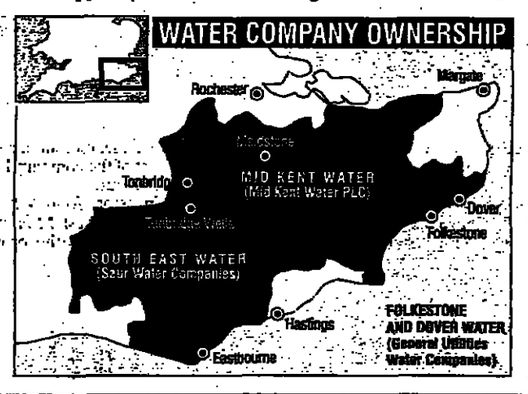
Partly through geographic accident, Mid Kent has more abundant water resources. Though 90 per cent of its supplies come from boreholes, it also has a stake in a reservoir near Tunbridge Wells which is managed by the region's combined water and sewerage firm, Southern Water.

However Mid Kent insists its neighbours could buy water of the company at reasonable commercial rates without the need for new infrastructure. According to Mr Baldwin, the idea of a grid "just doesn't make a lot of sense".

Deciding between such complex arguments is the unenviable task of the MMC panel led by deputy chairman Dan Goyder, who organised the controversial reports into the two bids for South West Water.

So far, defending the bid is thought to have cost the company more than £1m, compared with annual profits of £13m.

'It sends a message that Manchester is back, ready for Christmas'



Water fight: There are fears the advertising campaign may have offended as many people as it attracted

IN BRIEF

• **Cable & Wireless** yesterday unveiled plans to lay a fibre optic telecommunications cable linking China and North America at a cost of up to $500m. The project follows a memorandum of understanding with China signed yesterday by Cable & Wireless's chief executive, Dick Brown, who opened a representative office in Peking.

• **The US and EU** have decided to continue talks on an "open skies" agreement in early 1997, the European Commission's Washington delegation said. "The delegations agreed that it could be useful to continue their dialogue in early 1997 and will be considering how to move forward," the European Commission added. The two sides discussed the areas of competition, ownership and control restrictions, computer reservation system rules, dispute settlement, code-sharing and leasing. On the subjects of the exchange of traffic rights and the tariff approval regime, the EU delegation said it was constrained by the terms of its mandate and was not free to enter into negotiations.

• **TR Technology Trust** (TRT) has agreed reconstruction terms of its shares and package units with a new investment trust, Henderson Technology Trust (HTT). TRT, which was due to be wound up on 30 April 1998, said it had always intended to allow shareholders to continue investment beyond that date. Shareholders are being offered one HTT 'C' share for each TRT ordinary share. After completion, the 'C' shares will be convertible into HTT ordinary shares and warrants.

• **The number of UK company** failures fell by 10 per cent in the third quarter of this year compared with the same period in 1995. There were 3,423 company insolvencies in the three months to end-September. In the same period 6,657 individuals were declared bankrupt, a rise of 0.2 per cent.

• **US non-farm payroll** employment rose by 210,000 in October, the Labor Department said. The monthly unemployment rate was unchanged at 5.2 per cent, and average hourly earnings were also unchanged at $11.91 (£7.29). The consensus forecast among analysts was for October non-farm payroll employment to rise by 251,000 jobs and for the unemployment rate to remain unchanged. Hourly earnings were expected to rise 0.4 per cent.

• **David Abbott's** 11-year reign as chairman of Abbott Mead Vickers, the advertising agency, will end on 31 December when he will step down from the board. However, he will continue to be chairman and creative director of Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO.

• **SAS Scandinavian Airlines System** is cutting economy class return fares from Copenhagen to seven European destinations by 20-30 per cent in response to competition from UK operators Virgin Express and DebonAir. The cuts come into effect from Tuesday and will be in effect until 31 December on flights to Brussels, Nice, Madrid, Barcelona, Milan, Rome, and Vienna. The cheap flights will be available on certain conditions, such as a Saturday overnight stay, and must be booked seven days in advance.

• **Colt Telecom Group,** which provides local telecommunications services in London and Frankfurt, intends to seek a share listing in London and a quotation of American Depository Shares on Nasdaq in the US. The company plans to raise around £65m via a global equity offering. Timing and terms of the offering have yet to be finalised.

• **John Lewis Partnership,** the department stores group, said total sales for the 13 weeks to 26 October were 12.6 per cent higher than the same period a year ago. Department store sales in the 13-week period were up 16 per cent, while turnover in the food stores was up 9.6 per cent.

Whitbread eyes £40m BrightReasons sites

Nigel Cope

Whitbread is in talks to acquire the sites owned by BrightReasons, the Pizzaland and Bella Pasta group which has 180 outlets. The price is expected to be £40m-£50m, far lower than previous estimates. Whitbread is undertaking its due diligence process so the deal is unlikely to be announced with half-year results next Tuesday.

Whitbread is keen to expand its leisure interests following its £133m acquisition of Pelican, the Café Rouge and Dôme restaurant group, in July. It will re-brand the Pizzaland and Bella Pasta outlets as branches of Café Rouge, the Dôme and Costa Bros Coffee, another new Whitbread theme.

Café Rouge is tipped as the format most ripe for expansion. Most of its existing branches are within the M25 while 80 per cent of BrightReasons' outlets are outside London. The deal will therefore provide Whitbread with a short-cut to national coverage. The Pizzaland and Bella Pasta formats are of little interest to Whitbread as it already jointly owns Pizza Hut with PepsiCo.

Mark Puleikis of Merrill Lynch praised the deal. "Potentially, it looks very good. Whitbread wants to roll out the Café Rouge chains and this is a perfect way to do that."

BrightReasons was founded in 1990 by Michael Guthrie. Bella Pasta, which has 54 outlets, was launched in 1992 having evolved from the Pastificio chain. Pizzaland was acquired from Grand Metropolitan in 1991. It now has 104 branches. There are 20 branches of Pizza Piazza which were acquired from Rank in 1993.

An attempt at stock market flotation failed and BrightReasons was put up for sale earlier this month.

Salomon allowed to drop monthly reports to SFA

Jill Treanor
Banking Correspondent

The Securities and Futures Authority, the securities regulator, yesterday spared Salomon, the giant US investment bank, from further humiliation by lifting the special conditions imposed on the bank a year ago after the discovery of sloppy accounting procedures dating back 10 years.

In October 1995 the SFA ordered Salomon Brothers International, the London arm of the US bank, to submit monthly reports. These reports were "designed to highlight any problems that arise in the reconciliation of general ledger accounts and to track the satisfactory resolution of those problems". Once a quarter the bank's auditors had to review the monthly filings and submit a report to the SFA.

The unprecedented measures followed a $194m pre-tax book-keeping loss in Salomon's 1994 accounts, generated by a series of accounting problems in London which in the fourth quarter of 1994 forced the bank take $278m of pre-tax charges.

The SFA said Salomon had breached its rules which required control systems keep pace with the expansion and complexity of its business as set out in the Securities and Investments Board's principles.

The regulator said yesterday: "Based upon the information that the SFA required Salomon to submit for the 12-month period from 12 October 1995, the SFA is satisfied that the changes implemented are operating effectively, and the conditions can be discontinued."

A spokesman for Salomon said: "Twelve months ago we had corrected the problems and were in full compliance with the rules. The decision to lift [the reporting requirements] is confirmation of that."

Equities will suffer from a shift in US policy

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

The US presidential and congressional elections, nominally the world's most important electoral contest of the year, has turned out to be a rather dull and predictable affair, at least for the political commentators. For investors, however, the effect of the likely re-election of President Bill Clinton next week has been harder to gauge.

That he will be returned to the White House is more or less being taken as a foregone conclusion by markets. Mr Clinton has run a clever tactical campaign against an extremely poor effort by his rival, Senator Bob Dole, but has given very little away about the big issues. Once the election is out of the way, reducing the budget deficit and the policy of supporting a strong dollar are likely to again move up the new administration's agenda for action.

Meanwhile the Federal Reserve may feel less constrained politically in pursuing monetary policy. Fears that overheating in the economy will lead to renewed inflation could see the Fed act before the end of the year to raise interest rates.

The spillover from any shift in US economic policy is likely to have the biggest impact on UK equities. On one rather apocalyptic view, President Clinton may abandon the policy adopted in the first half of last year of talking up the dollar, leading to a run on equities around the world.

Albert Edwards, a strategist at Kleinwort Benson Securities, argues that the currency's strength has suited everyone's book. Both the Japanese economy, which teetered on the verge of deflation last year, and the continental European one have received a boost from the policy, which has helped make exports from both areas more competitive. At the same time, the strong dollar has acted as a brake on the strengthening US economy without the authorities having to resort to a rise in interest rates.

The problem, Mr Edwards argues, is that Mr Clinton will be forced by the mounting trade deficit to abandon this policy, leading to sharp rises in interest rates to choke off the inflationary effects of a sudden weakening of the currency. That could have dramatic effects on equities.

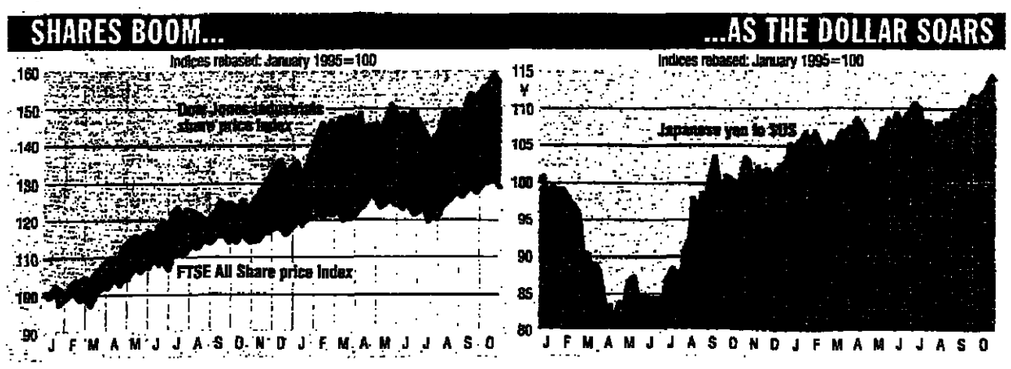
He is forecasting a fall of up to 20 per cent in the Dow Jones index, leaving it languishing near the 5,000 level by the year end, and, although he believes the London market is exhibiting defensive qualities, it is inconceivable that there would not be some collateral damage from a Wall Street slump of that magnitude.

But while others see little signs that the new administration will want to reverse the dollar's appreciation, even some more sanguine observers expect US interest rates to start rising again.

Highlighting which shares are likely to be hit if there is a fall out from President Clinton's policies is tricky. Earlier this week, the UK drugs sector fell out of bed as fears swept the market that he would again attempt to clamp down on the drugs bill to help curb the government deficit.

Casualties of any new assault on the drugs spending would obviously include the likes of Glaxo Wellcome, SmithKline Beecham and Zeneca, given their exposure to the big US market for pharmaceuticals. Another company clearly in the firing line in the wider attack on health is BAT Industries, given President Clinton's antipathy to the tobacco industry, although the shares are already discounting much of the worst. Others likely to suffer are Smith & Nephew and Vickers.

All is not gloom, however. Drugs companies would be beneficiaries of possible moves initiated by Mr Clinton to speed up approvals of new drugs by the powerful Food and Drug Administration.



market report / shares

DATA BANK

FTSE 100
3948 - 30.6

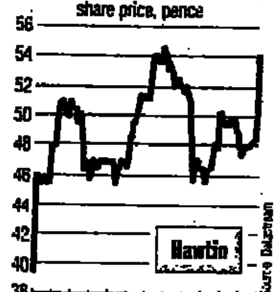
FTSE 250
4429.2 + 6.7

FTSE 350
1971.4 - 11.3

SEAQ VOLUME
669.9m shares,
36,425 bargains

Gilts Index
N/A

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



Talk of Shell strike for PowerGen enlivens the gloom

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year

Shares have endured their rockiest week since the surprising autumnal rally started to give the stock market an unexpected glow. Footsie fell 30.6 to 3,948.5, bringing this week's decline to 73.9 points. It is the first time the index has dipped below 3,950 for more than a month.

The retreat has occurred against a background of a stock market which has lost its enthusiasm and is looking decidedly jaded and unadventurous. Trading has not been heavy but in such a lacklustre atmosphere it does not require much effort for sellers to get the upper hand.

Blue chips should have gained a little help from New York yesterday. A firm overnight performance was quickly shrugged off and a fluctuating afternoon display used as another excuse for further lethargy.

The US elections are being cited as a reason for inactivity and there is little doubt this month's Budget is beginning to bear down on sentiment. This week's interest rate increase is still an adverse influence despite talk in some quarter that such a move was needed to remove some of the nervousness from the market.

Government stocks gave ground, up to 75p, on stories a leading US investment house had advised selling, apparently because of next year's election.

But even in a veritable wilderness of investment demand it is always possible to get a good story surging. **PowerGen** provided the vehicle with rumours **Shell** will pounce on the £3.5bn generator sending the shares 9p higher to 519p.

PG, like **National Power**, has had a breathtakingly dismal run and is no doubt due some light relief. UBS's much flagged gencos buy circular duly appeared and, it was claimed, generated a little US enthusiasm. NP ended 2p lower at 405p after touching 417.5p. The prospect of a power bid left Shell, already uneasy on the prospect of Iraqi oil flowing again, off 27.5p to 980p. Other electricities managed a few scattered gains on lingering take overhopes with waters trying to swim against the tide ahead of results.

On the merchant banking pitch **Hambros** again felt the uncomfortable tug of takeover speculation. An unidentified German bank was said to be about to strike. It was enough to lift the shares 7p to 254p.

Hambros is attempting to resist pressure from a Hong Kong fund manager, Regent Pacific, which has contented itself with buying 3 per cent of the equity but managed to make a great deal of noise.

The Far Eastern group is unimpressed with the merchant bank's profit display and is pressing for changes. Hambros is, however, recovering from last year's 44 per cent profits fall and a sharp recovery is expected this year with, perhaps, £68m in sight and £98m next year.

Whitbread, interim figures next week, gained 12.5p to 533.5p. It confirmed its interest in buying BrightReasons, the Pizzaland and Bella Pasta restaurant chains.

Communications shares basked in the excitement of the industry's first day of (almost) free-for-all ownership. **Yorkshire Tyne Tees** added another 15p to 1,282.5p and **Flextech** rose 17.5p to 632.5p. First-quarter figures and the hovering Murdoch cash-raising exercise lowered BSkyB 9.5p to 569p.

British Biotech edged ahead 2.5p to 229p ahead of the eagerly awaited update on its Marimastat cancer drug at a medical conference. Zeneca's decline, following its trading statement, continued with the shares down 20p at 1,652p. They were 1,750p before Tuesday's announcement.

In a buoyant travel sector **Airtours** climbed a further 29.5p to 682.5p on hopes the Monopolies and Mergers Investigation would not be too draconian. **Inspirations** rose 10p to 96.5p.

Newcomer **Corporate Executive Search** closed at 4.5p off a 3p placing price. **Deep Sea Leisure**, after a flat opening day, recovered 5p to 162.5p. The company runs the North Queensferry Aquarium, Scotland's third-largest tourist attraction, and is developing the Cheshire Oaks Aquarium, an £11.7m venture near Manchester.

JD Wetherspoon, the pubs chain, moved to another peak, up 17.5p to 1,212.5p. American fund managers are keen on the shares and there was talk they had picked up about 25,000, at 1,208p.

Hawtin, the leisure clothing group, gained 4p to 54p. Once an aspiring merchant bank it was caught up in the 1970's secondary banking crisis and then, under the direction of the Dovey family, developed as a mini-conglomerate which is now deeply involved in leisure wear and a variety of leisure products.

TAKING STOCK

☐ Reshaping of Carlisle from a property group into a healthcare business continues. With Deverok Pritchard, founder of nursing homes operator Takare, the guiding light and a big shareholder the company is thought to be near to completing a big deal. Mr Pritchard's campaign will be helped by Carlisle's latest property sale, pulling in nearly £2.2m. The shares firmed to 12.25p.

☐ Wedderburn, a property company, rose 1p to 11p as the former Suter stake, 26.3 per cent, was sold by Ascot Holdings. A reverse takeover deal seems likely.

☐ Shares of Stanford Rook, developing a TB treatment, are a buy, say stockbroker Panmure Gordon. It believes the company should be valued at £250m, not the present £72m. The shares are 367.5p.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.
Other details: r Ex rights x Ex-dividend a Ex all u Unlisted Securities Market s Suspended pp Partly Paid pm Nil Paid Shares. ‡ AIM Stock Source: FT Information

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FTSE 100 – Real-time	00	Sterling Rates	04	Privatisation Issues	38
UK Stock Market Report	01	Bullion Report	05	Water Shares	39
UK Company News	02	Wall St Report	20	Electricity Shares	40
Foreign Exchange	03	Tokyo Market	21	High Street Banks	41

Anyone with a tone-dial telephone can use this service. For a detailed description of The Independent Index, including its portfolio facility, phone 0891 123 333. For assistance, call our helpline 0171 873 4375 (9.30am - 5.30pm).

Calls cost 39p per minute (cheap rate), and 49p at all other times. Call charges include VAT

Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Vol'000	Stock	Vol'000	Stock	Vol'000	Stock	Vol'000
Sears	2280000	Cable & Wire	880000	Rentokil	610000	Cookson	540000
Hanson	1380000	Shell Transport	740000	LucasVarity	600000	BTR	530000
ASDA Group	1150000	Vodafone	690000	Lloyds TSB	600000	Burton	520000
BAT Inds.	1110000	BT	640000	BSkyB	560000	Taylor Woodrow	490000
British Gas	970000	Inchcape	610000	BP	540000	PowerGen	480000

FTSE 100 index hour by hour

Open 3962.7 up 3.8	11.00 3969.1 down 10.0	14.00 3969.4 down 9.7
09.00 3983.6 up 4.5	12.00 3966.7 down 12.4	15.00 3961.4 down 17.7
10.00 3977.4 down 1.7	13.00 3964.0 down 15.1	16.00 3946.0 down 33.1
		Close 3948.5 down 30.6

صكذا من الأصل

TAKING STOCK

Reshaping of Carlisle from a property group into a healthcare business continues. With Devetok Pritchard, founder of nursing homes operator Takare, the guiding light and a big shareholder the company is thought to be near to completing a big deal. Mr Pritchard's campaign will be helped by Carlisle's latest property sale, pulling in nearly £2.2m. The shares firmed to 12.25p.

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[illegible]

Telecommunications

Textiles & Apparel

Transport

Water

Rights Issues

Recent Issues

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unit trusts

UK GROWTH & INCOME

Fund	Estbd	Min Inv £	Fund Size £M	Offer Price	Over 1 Year Value £100	Rank
Gartmore UK Index	3/89	5000	219.3	181.30	116.8	1
Family United Charities	3/92	500	6.5	335.2	116.7	2
HSBC Footsie Fund	4/93	1000	82.4	86.56	115.9	3
Abbey General	1/57	1000	19.1	333.3	107.1	57
AES UK General	6/92	1000	1.8	172.0	113.4	7
Allied Dunbar Accumulator	8/72	3000	1063	1722	108.4	87
Allied Dunbar Asset Value	11/42	2000	2333	8820	109.6	60
Allied Dunbar Balanced	11/68	2000	1585	8808	108.3	83
Allied Dunbar Growth & Income	11/42	2000	70.5	308.0	102.2	40
AXA E&L General Acc	3/89	1000	14.0	776	109.6	35
AXA E&L General Inc	3/89	1000	14.0	59.0	112.5	93
AXA E&L UK Growth Inc	10/87	1000	41.5	323.3	108.7	78
Bank of Ireland Br Equity Gth	4/89	1000	6.5	125.2	105	94
Barclays Uni 500	2/68	500	403	1089	103.8	121
Barclays Uni Exempt	4/71	500	21.9	6890	108.0	88
Barclays Uni General	6/59	500	877.0	2546	112	36
Barclays Uni Trustee	12/61	500	18.9	2458	109.5	63
Barclaytrust Investment Inc	7/74	5000	283	4632	115.6	4
Baring Portfolio Inc	11/68	1000	62.5	546	102.2	125
Britannia UK General Inc	11/84	1000	57.2	1048.9	115.9	7
Carlile Growth	4/75	500	100.4	274.8	108.5	64
Capel-Cure Income & Growth Inc	8/75	500	65.8	4883.0	104.5	18
Cazenove UK Equity	11/89	2500	28.4	104.9	112.8	8
City Financial J Siddall I & G	10/90	500	1.0	527.8	98.5	127
City Financial Shaw Utilities	3/93	2000	1.9	56.43	84.7	36
Clerical Med General Equity	10/86	1000	278.3	116.7	108.6	57
Colonial Capital	5/89	1000	4.1	87.00	111	91
Consistent UT	2/88	1000	2.2	325.6	107.8	22
Credit Suisse Growth Port Inc	7/88	1000	44.4	185.0	112.5	34
CU PPT UK & General Inc	10/85	500	89.2	124.8	112	100
CU Quilter Fund Inc	1/73	500	8.2	857.7	108.9	44
Eagle Star UK Balanced Inc	8/85	1000	43.7	184.9	107	48
Edinburgh Growth & Income	7/46	500	52.5	308.4	112	65
Edinburgh UK Income & Growth	5/85	1000	4.8	288.4	107	35
Equitable Pelican	1/69	500	400.2	1488.4	121	76
F&C UK Exempt Acc	11/88	5000	1.8	550.4	108.8	33
Family Asset	1/61	1000	38.2	102.5	104	18
Fidelity Growth & Income	12/79	1000	38.6	180.1	109.7	38
Five Arrows Major UK Companies	7/88	500	28.5	130.3	112.8	83
Five Arrows UK Equity Income	7/74	500	1.8	2704.3	112	88
Fleming Finsbury Prof Inc	8/87	10000	2.8	182.0	108	40
Framlington Income & Growth	12/71	500	28.9	218.9	110.9	30
Friends Prov Equity	2/70	1000	325.7	4898.0	115	6
GA GANDA	9/68	1000	65.4	313	109	68
GAM UK Diversified Acc	8/90	10000	4.3	2580.3	109.8	82
Gartmore UK Equity Income	2/72	500	73.7	705.9	108.4	113
GEM Dolphin UK & General	7/89	1000	2.2	545.0	105.9	72
Govett FTSE Mid 250 Index	8/92	3000	10.3	582.5	108.1	85
Guardian Guardhill	10/67	1000	277.4	683.8	116.3	77
Henderson Model Portfolio	3/88	1000	2.0	2580	104	31
Henderson Ex Income & Growth	5/80	2000	1.0	3168.0	113.8	128
Henderson Income & Growth	5/69	1000	172.9	2320.1	105.2	98
Hill Samuel British	11/68	500	76.2	1000	112.8	17
Hill Samuel Income & Growth	1/83	500	122.8	104.2	102.2	96
HSBC UK Index	3/90	1000	184.5	97.2	107	45
INVESCO Income & Growth	7/68	1000	100.2	50.7	114.0	19
Laurence Keen Income & Growth	8/89	1000	14.7	728.2	114.5	9
Lazard UK Income & Growth	4/71	5000	58.1	557.9	108.5	61
Legal & General UK Index	9/92	1000	48.2	77.9	112.9	26
Legal & General UK Stockmkt Acc	5/88	2000	88	722.3	112.2	43
Lincoln National Growth	7/82	500	105.7	682.3	104.7	63
Lincoln National Income	6/82	500	15.9	754.0	102.1	130
Lloyds Bank Balanced Acc	4/87	1000	179.0	1050.0	113.9	110
Lloyds Bank FTSE 100	11/94	1000	43.9	320.0	112.1	119
Lloyds Bank Income Acc	10/70	1000	231.1	1540	105.4	75
Lloyds Bank UK Equity Income	11/69	50000	58.9	1250	105.8	97
London & Manchester General	11/80	500	38.2	1620	108.4	106
M&G General	4/57	500	452.1	740	104.8	121
M&G Midland & General	5/56	500	2825.0	654.0	98.1	28
M&G Second General	4/56	500	348.0	82.3	103.6	120
M&G Trustee	9/61	500	56.9	452.0	107.1	128
Maldon General	3/87	5000	9.3	97.1	106	118
Marks & Spencer UK Sel Ptl Acc	10/89	500	152	2008	108.2	70
Mayflower British Leaders	2/70	500	0.8	482.9	108.4	34
Mayflower Higher Income	2/86	10000	1.4	108.9	98.3	129
Mayflower Income	2/70	500	7.8	480.3	103.9	19
Mercury General	8/67	1000	305.4	680.7	112.7	23
Mercury UK Equity	10/71	50000	225.48	728.0	113.4	13
MGM UK Growth	11/82	1000	180.0	4948.0	119	29
Morgan Grenfell UK Ind Tr Acc	10/88	1000	89.8	288.0	108.3	68
Morgan Grenfell UK Ind Tr Inc	10/88	1000	99.8	208.6	108.1	71
Nat Australia Stockmarket Gth	10/95	2000	1.8	18.4	110	39
NatWest UK General Acc	1/85	1000	60.2	794.4	108.6	79
Newton Foundation	10/90	1000	12.4	185.0	121	58
Newton Income	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

[illegible]

UK EQUITY & BOND

Fund	Estbd	Min Inv £	Fund Size £M	Offer Price	Over 1 Year Value £100	Rank
BWD Balanced Portfolio	1/90	500	12.4	201.00	114.7	1
NPI UK Extra Income Acc	4/91	500	40.2	122.50	112.5	2
NPI UK Extra Income Inc	8/91	500	40.2	100.22	112.4	3
Carlile Income Dis	3/78	2000	7.6	133.7	108.6	4
Colonial Balanced	5/89	1000	18.9	72.82	108.4	5
Credit Suisse High Income Port	2/89	1000	12.2	88.2	108	6
Lloyds Bank Extra Income Acc	2/76	1000	86.5	830.70	102.9	14
Perpetual High Income	2/88	1000	1250.9	1343.0	105.7	7
Save & Prosper Income	10/60	1000	76.5	148.0	108.1	9
Sun Life Cap Protector Acc	2/88	1000	5.7	682.1	108.6	7
Sun Life Managed High Yld Inc	6/85	500	8.9	859.4	105.9	10
Sun Life Managed Inc & Gr Inc	6/85	500	30.5	932.7	108.8	8
Sun Life/Canada High Inc	3/88	500	15.4	325.6	102.9	11
TSB High Income Acc	6/80	500	68.3	1004.0	108.2	12

UK EQUITY & BOND INCOME

UK GROWTH

UK EQUITY INCOME

GILT & FIXED INTEREST

INTERNATIONAL FIXED INTEREST

INVESTMENT TRUST UNITS

FINANCIAL & PROPERTY SHARES

INTERNATIONAL GROWTH

NORTH AMERICA

EUROPE

JAPAN

FAR EAST (INCLUDING JAPAN)

COMMODITY & ENERGY

INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INCOME

FUND OF FUNDS

UK SMALLER COMPANIES

FAR EAST (EXCLUDING JAPAN)

INTERNATIONAL EQUITY & BOND

MANAGED BONDS

Fund	Estbd	Min Inv £	Fund Size £M	Offer Price	Over 1 Year Value £100	Rank
TSB Managed	3/83	500	186.5	185.5	105.3	110
United Friendly Managed	3/76	1000	63.5	308.2	103.5	169
Wesleyan Managed	1/88	2000	48.4	445.4	108.5	8
Windsor Balanced		0	6.1	90.7	104.3	186
Windsor Balanced S3	4/87	1000	6.1	202.4	108.4	64
Windsor Crown Managed	4/79	2000	107.6	7368.0	105.3	100
Windsor Graham Managed S3	5/74	1000	808.7	865.5	108.0	73
Windsor Investor Units	4/73	500	836.3	48.3	105.7	54
Windsor Kiwi Key Managed	1/74	500	836.3	66.0	108.2	19
Windsor Lifetime Managed Gth	7/90	0	836.3	2165.0	105.2	104
Windsor Lifetime Managed Opps	7/90	0	1.0	1673.0	105.6	19
Winterthur Unit Fund Mixed	10/89	500	11.2	1688.0	107.2	45
Woolwich Life Managed	10/80	0	16.5	90.0	108.9	47
Zurich Life UK Managed	11/86	1000	9.2	235.8	104.2	147

SECTOR AVERAGES

	Fund size £M	Over 1 Yr Value £100	*Number of funds
UK Growth & Income	176.3	108.9	132
UK Growth	118.6	111.8	135
UK Equity Income	158.4	107.0	81
UK Equity & Bond	131.7	107.7	14
UK Equity & Bond Income	64.2	105.3	34
Gilt & Fixed Interest	40.7	104.9	103
International Fixed Interest	34.4	98.3	31
Investment Trust Units	85.3	108.3	15
Financial & Property Shares	56.4	110.6	8
International Growth	80.0	104.9	107
North America	51.9	112.0	112
Europe	90.0	111.1	78
Japan	71.0	91.0	84
Far East (including Japan)	52.3	97.4	36
Commodity & Energy	48.6	112.6	12
International Equity Income	58.5	105.2	8
Fund of Funds	98.3	104.9	53
UK Smaller Companies	106.1	112.6	63
Far East (excluding Japan)	107.5	99.5	68
International Equity & Bond	102.9	106.1	24
Managed Bonds	182.1	105.8	175

Top three performing funds of each sector are highlighted in bold at the top of each sector. The two end columns showing the value of £100 and rank over one year are based on offer to bid prices with income reinvested. All funds are more than one year old. Fund sizes taken on the first day of the previous month. The Independent publishes other unit trust information Tuesday to Friday.
Source: FT Information/LSW

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*Excludes funds, that are less than one year old

Foreign Exchange Rates

STERLING Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	DOLLAR Spot	1 month	3 months	D-MARK Spot
US	1.6376	11-9	30-28	1.000	–	–	0.6534
Canada	2.1865	54-49	164-156	1.3353	24-23	75-73	0.8609
Germany	2.4833	65-58	194-184	1.5165	30-28	90-87	1.0000
France	8.3982	197-183	592-565	5.1290	96-91	269-262	3.3780
Italy	2491.9	31-45	103-133	1521.8	28-35	91-101	1003.48
Japan	186.01	91-87	278-272	113.59	48-47	143-142	74.907
ECU	1.2942	21-18	66-61	1.2654	13-14	44-45	0.5211
Belgium	51.157	15-10	42-36	31.240	7-5	20-17	20.600
Denmark	9.5392	222-177	655-556	5.8253	89-79	298-287	3.8410
Netherlands	2.7877	76-68	223-215	1.7024	38-37	121-118	1.1226
Ireland	0.9988	5-1	15-10	1.6385	6-3	10-6	0.4022
Norway	10.455	100-80	380-270	6.3846	50-25	119-89	4.2101
Spain	209.02	12-21	31-48	127.65	16-23	40-48	84.178
Sweden	10.783	15-8	44-33	6.5848	41-16	152-101	4.3421
Switzerland	2.0822	80-72	233-220	1.2715	40-37	119-114	0.8384
Australia*	2.0782	10-16	15-25	1.2678	14-16	33-35	0.8380
Hong Kong	12.662	93-52	240-180	7.7320	3-0	2-7	5.1346
Malaysia	4.1338	0-0	0-0	2.5290	27-32	90-85	1.6672
New Zealand*	2.3132	64-71	155-168	1.4113	54-56	37-39	2.3307
Saudi Arabia	6.1417	0-0	0-0	3.7505	1-4	5-9	2.4731
Singapore	2.3065	0-0	0-0	1.4085	24-19	70-65	0.9288

OTHER SPOT RATES

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1.6372	0.9995	Nigeria	133.437	81.5002
Austria	17.4655	10.6656	Oman	0.6306	0.3850
Brazil	1.6835	1.0278	Pakistan	65.8529	40.2799
China	13.5354	8.3000	Philippines	43.1103	26.3250
Egypt	5.5765	3.4051	Portugal	251.237	153.300
Finland	7.4482	4.5459	Qatar	5.9607	3.6400
Ghana	2799.44	1710.00	Russia	8052.03	5464.30
Greece	390.548	238.430	South Africa	7.6822	4.6900
India	59.3786	35.6500	Taiwan	45.0941	27.5300
Kuwait	0.4311	0.2996	UAE	6.0180	3.6740

Note: Forward rates quoted high to low are at a discount (subtract from spot rate). those quoted low to high are at a premium (add to spot rate). *Dollar rates quoted as reciprocals. For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0891 123 3033. Calls cost 36p per minute (cheap rate) 48p other times.

Tourist Rates

£ Buys		£ Buys		£ Buys	
Australia(Dollars)	2.0050	France(Francs)	8.170	New Zealand(Dollars)	2.3025
Austria(Schillings)	16.9400	Germany(Marks)	2.4120	Norway(Kroner)	10.1822
Belgium(Francs)	49.5800	Greece(Drachmae)	381.0000	Portugal(Escudos)	244.4200
Canada(Dollars)	2.1320	Hong Kong(Dollars)	12.3100	Spain(Pesetas)	202.7500
Cyprus(Pounds)	0.7295	Ireland(Punts)	0.9720	Sweden(Kronor)	10.5442
Denmark(Kroner)	9.2935	Italy(Lira)	2433.0000	Switzerland(Francs)	2.0285
Holland(Guilders)	2.7050	Japan(Yen)	181.2000	Turkey(Lira)	157725.5500
Finland(Marks)	7.3840	Malta(Lira)	0.5685	United States(Dollars)	1.5957

Interest Rates

UK		**Germany**		**US**		**Japan**	
Base	6.00%	Discount	2.50%	Prime	8.25%	Discount	0.50%
France		Lombard	4.50%	Discount	5.00%	**Belgium**	
Intervention	3.20%	**Canada**		Fed Funds	5.25%	Discount	2.50%
Italy		Prime	5.00%	**Spain**		Central	3.30%
Discount	7.5%	Discount	5.00%	10-Day Repo	6.75%	**Switzerland**	
Netherlands		**Denmark**		**Sweden**		Discount	1.00%
Advances	2.50%	Discount	3.25%	Repo (Ave)	4.60%	Lombard	4.00%

Bond Yields

Country	5 yr	Yield %	10 yr	yield %	Country	5 yr	Yield %	10 yr	yield %
UK	7%	7.30	7½%	7.70	Netherlands	9¼%	4.95	6%	[illegible]
US	6⅛%	6.08	7⅛%	6.34	Spain	10.10%	6.06	8.75%	7.[illegible]
Japan	5.5%	1.49	3%	2.54	Italy	9½%	7.36	9½%	[illegible]
Australia	8¾%	6.52	10%	7.33	Belgium	5%	4.85	[illegible]	[illegible]
Germany	8.25%	5.37	6.25%	6.01	Sweden	10%	6.37	6%	[illegible]
France	5¾%	4.36	7.25%	5.94	ECU OAT	6%	5.14	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: HSBC Markets Research — Yields calculated on local basis ** Denotes new benchmark

Money Market Rates

	O'Night		7 Day		1 Month		3 Months		6 Months		1 Year	
Interbank	5½	7	6	6⅛	6	6⅛	6⅛	6¼	6⅛	6¼	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sterling CDs	-		-		6⅛		6⅛		6⅛		6⅛	
Local Authority Deps	6⅛		5⅞		6⅛		6⅛		6¼		6⅛	
Discount Market Deps	7		6⅛		-		-		-		-	
Treasury Bills (Buy)	-		-		5⅞		5⅞		-		-	
Dollar CDs	-		-		5.11		5.09		5.12		5.22	
ECU Linked Dep	-	-	-	-	4½	4⅛	4½	4⅛	4½	4⅛	4½	4⅛

Liffe Financial Futures

Contract		Settlement price	High/Low for day		EstConts traded	Open interest
Long Gilt	(Dec 96)	108-21	109-21	108-10	120604	147621
German Gvt Bd	(Dec 96)	99.54	100.02	99.28	180267	250344
Italian Bond	(Dec 96)	123.20	124.02	122.98	31019	85453
Japan Gvt Bd	(Dec 96)	125.26	125.69	125.25	3679	n.a
3 Mth Sterling	(Dec 96)	93.68	93.73	93.66	29356	100573
	(Mar 97)	93.45	93.56	93.43	42962	93006
3 Mth Euromark	(Dec 96)	96.77	96.81	96.76	23423	213901
	(Mar 97)	96.73	96.80	96.70	37436	137402
3 Mth Eurolira	(Dec 96)	92.67	92.70	92.61	8580	70720
	(Mar 97)	93.20	93.25	93.15	11357	55635
3 Mth Euroyen	(Mar 97)	99.37	99.38	99.37	290	n.a
3 Mth Euroswiss	(Dec 96)	97.99	98.10	97.93	8987	30553
	(Mar 97)	97.96	98.10	97.93	10053	31059
3 Mth ECU	(Dec 96)	95.79	95.84	95.79	343	7464
	(Mar 97)	95.76	95.84	95.75	150	5275
FTSE 100	(Dec 96)	3971.0	4012.0	3953.0	14871	61260
FTSE 250	(Dec 96)	4453.0	4452.0	4452.0	150	4229

Liffe FTSE Index Option

Settlement price: 3949.00	closing offer price				Call/Put
Series	3850	3900	3950	4000	Total vols
Nov	116/7	75/15	41/32	16/61	- -
Dec	154/31	115/43	82/63	54/87	- -
Jan	174/46	138/60	108/80	79/104	- -
Feb	197/60	164/76	130/94	103/118	- -

Commodities

INDUSTRIAL METALS - London Metal Exchange

$/tonne	Cash	3 mths	Volume	LME Stocks		chg
Aluminium HG	1385-85	1418-7	4635	963425	-	1250
Aluminium Alloy	1245-50	1273-5	309	77360	-	650
Copper A	1967-95	1930-31	65068	133700	-	5052
Lead	740-1	733-4	1821	116575	-	475
Nickel	7370-80	7180-5	3267	42414	-	30
Tin	5905-15	5975-80	3285	9965	-	70
Zinc	1048.5-50.5	1071-2	34801	541875	-	2500
Settlement Conversion exchange rates	£/$ 1.6383	$/Dm 1.5182	$/¥ 113.76	Stock volumes & change in tonnes as at Fri 1 Nov '96		

PRECIOUS METALS

pm fix /oz	$	£	Coins	$	£		$	£
Platinum	381.00	234.30	Britannia	396	242	Krugrands	371-381	227-234
Palladium	118.50	71.65	Britannia.5 oz	203	124	Sovs	87-95	53-58
Silver spot	482.50	296.30	Britannia.25 oz	106	65	Nobles	376-390	230-242
Gold Bullion	379.50	233.22	Britannia.10 oz	54	33	Maple Leaf	379-392	232-240

Source: Mocatta & Goldsmid

AGRICULTURAL

Cocoa		Coffee		Barley		Potatoes		Potatoes	
LCE	£/tonne	LCE	$/tonne	LCE	£/tonne	LCE	£/tonne	ATA	£/tonne
Dec	916	Nov	1494	Nov	91.00	Nov	40.00	-	-
Mar	949	Jan	1394	Jan	92.75	Mar	63.00	Feb	77
May	966	Mar	1334	Mar	94.25	Apr	71.00	Apr	5
Vol:	3882	Vol:	2686	Vol:	10	Vol:	23	Vol:	18
White Sugar		**Freight**		**Wheat**		**Corn**			
LCE	$/tonne	LCE	$10/index pt	LCE	£/tonne	CBOT#		Cents/bushel	
							Hi-Lo		Sett
Dec	308.20	Oct	1410	Nov	94.75				
Mar	305.20	Nov	1360	Jan	96.25	Dec	270.00-265.50		268.50
May	308.50	Vol.	1330	Mar	97.70	May	276.50-272.25		273.25
Vol	3389	Index	212	Vol.	629	May	280.00-279.00		279.50

Other Softs (Agricultural) correct as at 31/10/96

Nov	Maize (No3)**	$/tonne	127.00	Nov	Soya Oil§	FL100/kg	97.00
Nov	Copra (1)	$/tonne	134.00	Nov	Coconut Oil (1)	$/tonne	750.00
Dec	Cotton (NY)	USc/lb	72.50	Jan	Sunflower Oil§	$/tonne	525.00
Dec	Wool	Acent/kg	705.00	Nov	Rapeseed Oil§	FL100/kg	95.50
Dec	Rubber*	Mcent/kg	316.00	Nov	Groundnut Oil	$/tonne	775.00

Origins: §Dutch/EC - delivery origin - †Philippines/Indonesia *Malaysia **N Europe Source: FT Information Reuters

ENERGY

Brent Crude		($/barrel)		Gasoil	($/tonne)		WTI		Products †	($/tonne)
IPE	5.30pm	*chg	Yr ago	IPE	close	*chg		6pm	Spot CIF North West Europe	
Dec	22.70	-0.65	16.58	Nov	210.00	-7.00	Dec	23.36	Unleaded Gasoline	227-229
Jan	22.31	-0.82	16.55	Dec	207.00	-7.00	Jan	21.05	Heavy Fuel Oil	110-112
Feb	21.84	-0.52	16.53	Jan	206.00	-5.50	Feb	22.70	Naphtha	212-221
Vol	28615	Index	23.19	Vol		10248	Mar	22.35	EC Gasoil	210-220

*versus 5.30pm previous day. Year ago prices show average for week. Source: IPE/London Oil Reports. †Platts prices

COMMODITY INDICES

*GSCI Indices	Base date	+Spot	%Day Chg	Dec 31st	% Yr to dt chg	Year ago	% Yr chg
Index	1970=100	234.82	-2.80	220.50	+0.70	211.10	+11.51
Agricultural	1970=100	220.86	-2.26	231.75	-9.48	210.29	10.02
Energy	1970=100	80.00	-3.87	71.31	+12.18	59.25	+35.21
Industrl Metals	1970=100	161.48	+0.55	193.32	-16.47	194.04	+17.04
Livestock	1970=100	190.75	-0.54	182.71	+4.39	173.34	+10.00
Precious Metals	1970=100	472.99	0.54	489.66	-3.04	495.64	2.70

Source: Goldman Sachs & Co. *GSCI is a trademark and service mark of Goldman Sachs & Co. †Close as of 31 Oct 1996

100 Largest Insurance Funds

Stock	Bid	Mid	Offer	Stock	Bid	Mid	Offer
Abbey Equity Ser 4	270.8		285.1	Legal & General Managed Accum	264.1		278.1
Abbey International Ser 4	216.4		227.8	London & Manchester Flexible Acc		602.3	
Abbey Managed Ser 4	775.7		816.8	London Equity		1057.9	
Abbey National Managed	139.4		146.8	London Mixed		836.5	
Abbey National UK Equity	148.9		156.8	M & G Managed Bond Acc	1004.2		1057.1
Albany Equity Acc Ser 3	959.4		779.4	M & G Recovery Bond Acc	302.0		[illegible]
Albany Multiple Inv Acc S3	1225		1287	Merchant Investors Managed	551.1		580.3
Allied Dunbar Distribution Bond	250		265.0	Midland Deferred	384		404
Allied Dunbar Equity Acc	1756.4		1736.3	Midland UK Equity	118.6		124.1
Allied Dunbar Gen 4 High Income Ser	238.40		435.0	NatWest Growth Managed	139.6		147.1
Allied Dunbar Managed Acc	1902.2		1270.5	NatWest Security Mgd	127.4		134.1
Allied Dunbar Property Acc	643.50		677.40	NatWest UK Equity	160.3		168.3
AXA Equity & Law Bal Ser 6	844.70		889.0	Norwich Union Mgd Ex NUAM MF	172.5		182.5
AXA Equity & Law Dist Ser 6	197.5		198.0	Norwich Union Unitised Managed	172.4		179.7
AXA Equity & Law Hi Inc Ser 6	1236.40		1301.90	Norwich Union Unitised With Profits	162.9		171.3
AXA Equity & Law UK Eq Ser 6	1231.20		1295.90	NPI Managed	577.9		608.3
Barclays Equity Acc	1058.3		1114.0	Pearl Equity Nac	719.5		757.3
Barclays International Acc	451.7		475.5	Pearl Managed	718.5		757.3
Barclays Managed Acc	622.4		655.3	Prudential Prudund Managed	477.3		475.1
Black Horse Income Fund Ser 2	901.32		948.76	Prudential Indiv Mgd Ser 2	358.7		377.5
Black Horse Mngd Inv S2	560.51		590.44	Royal Life Managed	457.4		481.4
Canada Managed Ser 2	543.7		688.1	Royal Scottish Growth Managed	685.1		723.2
CM Fid Equity	398.5		433.6	Royal Scottish UK Equity	326.6		341.1
CM Fid Sapphire Mixed	336.5		354.4	Scottish Amicable Equity Ser 1	754.7		791.4
Col Wm Profits Bond	108.2		108.2	Scottish Amicable Managed Ser 1	510.0		537.0
Confederation Equity I	213.7		233.9	Scottish Equitable Mixed	304.7		320.7
Commercial Union Managed	416		436.6	Scottish Life Managed	342.4		360.4
Commercial Union UK Equity	602.8		634.4	Scottish Mutual Safety	352.7		371.3
Commercial Union With Profit	135.4		142.5	Scot Prov Inst Blue Chip	106.3		112.0
Eagle Star Managed 2	197.9		197.7	Scot Prov Inst With-Profits	122.3		131.1
Family Performance	160.0		168.4	Scottish Widows International	548.5		577.4
Friends Provident Managed	359.8		378.8	Scottish Widows Mixed	540.3		568.8
Friends Provident UK Equity	510.3		537.2	Standard Equity	1294.0		1362.1
Friends Provident With Profit	208.4		212.3	Standard European	195.0		205.3
General Accident With Profit	156.5		164.7	Standard Far East	102.8		108.2
GA Prov Mutual Eq Ord	896.3		943.5	Standard Fixed Interest	452.9		476.2
GA Prov Mutual Mgd Ord	568.2		598.6	Standard Managed	880.5		926.7
Gen Managed	354.4		373.1	Sun Alliance Equity	1295		1363
GRE Equity Acc	1273.2		1337.1	Sun Alliance Managed	271.3		285.6
GRE International Acc	736.7		775.5	Sun Life Deferred Distribution	183.5		193.2
GRE Managed Acc	784.5		826.3	Sun Life Distribution	287.8		303.0
Hill Samuel Equity	743.3		785.8	Sun Life Equity Acc	777.2		818.1
Hill Samuel Managed Ser A	645.0		682.6	Sun Life Managed Acc	1046.3		1101.4
Irish Life Global Mgd Prem Ser 3	674.4		709.9	Sun Life Can Century Eq		477.0	
J Rothschild/SU Pooled Mgd	134.3		194.0	Sun Life Can Century Mgd		187.7	
Laurentian Imperial UK Mgd Acc	316.3		333.5	Sun Life Can Maple Leaf Eq Acc	653.5		687.9
Laurentian Managed Acc Ser 3	620.2		652.8	Sun Life Can Maple Leaf Mgd Acc	462.1		486.4
Laurentian UK Equity Acc	550.4		579.3	TSB Equity	441.8		465.1
Legal & General Equity Acc	1485		1491.1	TSB Homebuyer	250.5		263.7
Legal & General International Acc	663.4		635.2	TSB Managed	334.2		351.8

ATHLETICS: Chicago triumph brings marathon fever to Cornwall. **Mike Rowbottom** reports

Marian Sutton, the pride of Looe, out on a training run by Siblyback Reservoir near Liskeard on Bodmin Moor Photograph: Peter Jay

Sutton no longer running in the dark

The letter of congratulation was addressed, simply, to Marian Sutton, Marathon Runner, Looe. It reached its destination.

To be honest, the chances of its doing so were pretty good, given the amount of mail this 6ft athlete generated by her victory in last month's Chicago Marathon. Besides, there are not too many marathon runners in her particular Cornish town, as Sutton knows all too well.

The 33-year-old, who has worked for 14 years as a full-time solicitor's secretary, has nobody else to train with most of the time on her morning and evening runs.

And now the nights are drawing in, limited street lighting means she has to work all four corners of the town, sometimes twice, to gain sufficient mileage. "I'm on automatic pilot," she said. "I can get to all four corners and know I've run for 40 minutes. I don't need a watch."

Nor, in a sense, does she need the $43,000 (£27,000) she picked up in the Windy City after a personal best time of 2hr 30min 41sec had brought her her first marathon victory at the ninth attempt. "Everybody has been asking me what I'm going to do with all the money. I haven't got a clue," she said. With her husband also working, in the local council's legal department, and no children on the scene as yet, she lives comfortably enough.

As soon as she got back to the office, with her poster of a Rover Cabriolet next to her desk, she was asked if she was now going to buy the car for real. The answer was, and is: definitely maybe.

"To me, I've won a race," she said. "It's everybody else who's making a real big deal of it. Looe is a very small community. There's about 5,000 people here. And since Chicago they've just gone mad."

There was the expected attention from local TV, radio and press. There were banners. There was bunting. And when she got home to her front room, there was the Mayor of Looe with a large bouquet of flowers.

> 'The response has been wonderful. You'd think I'd won Olympic gold'

"I have had so many cards and letters and phone calls," Sutton said. "The response has been wonderful. Anyone would think I'd won the Olympic gold."

At which point you sense sharp regret. Sutton was controversially left out of the marathon team for Atlanta this summer, when the two women selected alongside Liz McColgan – Karen McLeod and Suzanne Rigg – both had disappointing runs.

"I was told I was left out because I wouldn't react well to the conditions in Atlanta," she said. "And yet I'd beaten Karen in difficult conditions at the Stuttgart World Championships three years earlier. I could be a right grouch about it. Nothing will compensate for missing the Olympics. But I think I have proved my point now."

A week after her victory she met the chairman of the marathon selectors, Alan Warner, at the Midland relays. "He was full of congratulations," she recalled. "I was very polite."

Whether she will be acquiescent to a request to run in next year's World Championships is, however, far from certain. "I will do a spring marathon, which is likely to be London," she said. "I definitely wouldn't do the worlds as well. I don't think there is enough time in between."

She is inclined to prudence in exerting herself, but that is partly because she foresees a career that will continue for at least another four years.

"There is a lot more in me yet," she said. "I don't feel I've peaked." By way of encouragement, she needs point no further than the Chicago result sheet – the first 14 home were over 30 years of age.

Runners such as Joyce Smith, who won top class marathons in her forties, and even Eamonn Martin, still competing at top level at 38, are inspirational to her.

Looking forward to next year, she can expect a new attitude from race organisers and an opportunity to improve still further on her Chicago time – which places her 10th on the all-time British list. "When I crossed the line in Chicago and saw the clock I was disappointed," she said. "I had set a target of running sub-2:30."

Her other abiding target, however, is an appearance at the Olympics after the frustration of being named as reserve in 1992 and 1996.

In the meantime she is working on one other ambition. "The people at work are very good about my running, but if they can be a little more lenient on me it will mean I can run in the daylight." It doesn't seem a lot to ask.

Giles braves heat of battle

Cricket

England A 155
New South Wales 2nd XI 215-5

Ashley Giles struggled through the Australian heat to underline his Test credentials and prevent New South Wales XI from establishing a commanding first-innings lead over England A on the second day of their tour match in Tamworth.

Giles, the Warwickshire left-armer, grabbed 4 for 79 in 27 gruelling overs as NSW reached 215 for 5 to claim a 60-run advantage after wrapping up England's innings within three balls of their overnight 155.

The 23-year-old Giles reduced the inexperienced NSW line-up to 47 for 4 until Scott Thompson and Craig Glassock added 113 in 146 balls during the final session, which was extended to compensate for the delayed start following yesterday's torrential rain storm.

Thompson finished unbeaten on 78, including nine fours and three sixes, while Glassock was on 56 when play finished to end Giles' marathon bowling stint.

"I was pleased with the way I bowled early on but I got very tired in the final session. The heat was incredible," he said. "The last session was very long, but considering it was the first team we've bowled for about six weeks, I thought we stuck to our task well."

Second day of four; England A won toss

ENGLAND A – First Innings

(Overnight: 155 for 9; O A Shah 76)

D W Headley b Freedman	0
P M Such not out	0
Extras (lb2)	2
Total (69.5 overs)	155

Fall: 1-21 2-21 3-25 4-60 5-120 6-127 7-143 8-155 9-155.

Bowling: Alley 10-3-21-2; Clark 7-0-28-0; MacGill 25-13-43-4; Thompson 7-2-20-1; Freedman 20.5-6-41-3.

NEW SOUTH WALES 2nd XI – First Innings

J L Arnberger c Headley b Giles	17
A D McQuire run out	17
*M T Haywood c Hegg b Giles	5
P Marazotis b Giles	0
G C Rummens c Butcher b Giles	24
†C A Glassock not out	56
S M Thompson not out	78
Extras (b1 lb3 nb14)	18
Total (for 5, 73 overs)	215

Fall: 1-26 2-40 3-40 4-44 5-102.

To bat: P J S Alley, D A Freedman, S Clark, S C G MacGill.

Bowling: Headley 10-2-30-0; Crapple 6-2-10-0; Giles 27-8-79-4; Such 23-4-73-0; White 5-1-11-0; Hollioake 2-0-8-0.

Umpires: S Tausal and I Emerson.

■ South Africa beat Australia by eight wickets in the Titan Cup triangular series in Gauhati, India. They won with five overs to spare after Michael Bevan (79) and Michael Slater (53 not out) had helped Australia make 238 for 6. In reply Andrew Hudson made 68 off 85 balls and Lance Klusener 88 not out. India play Australia tomorrow to decide who meets South Africa in the final.

Lee lifts Old Loughts

Hockey

BILL COLWILL

With just three points separating the top eight teams in the Premier Division of the National League, the going is getting tough.

The leaders, Old Loughtonians, who had two impressive wins last weekend, entertain the highly talented but at times unpredictable East Grinstead tomorrow. The Old Boys expect to have Great Britain international Jason Lee, a former Grinstead player, back in their squad but are otherwise unchanged. Grinstead will be missing Scottish international Marc Zander who was injured last weekend.

Second-placed Reading travel to Guildford who are not having the best of seasons in spite of the goalscoring triumphs of their player-coach, Ian Jennings. The all-attacking Cannock, currently in third place, visit Teddington, who are still without the Great Britain captain Jason Laslett, taking a well earned rest after his Olympic exertions. So there is unlikely to be any change in the top three places on Sunday evening.

At the bottom, Havant, without a point, go to the Midlands to play Barford Tigers and are unlikely to receive any charity.

Southgate's player-coach, James Duthie, will be returning to struggling Surbiton – the side he coached for the past three years, alongside Nigel D'Cruz who left the Surrey club to move north of the river just a couple of weeks ago. Surbiton's midfield was strengthened last week with the arrival of the Pakistan under-21 international Mashood Hussain, but it is the leaks in defence left by Duthie's departure they need to plug.

In the First Division Beeston, three points clear of Bournville, entertain Sheffield and look set to maintain their lead.

WARWICK

HYPERION

12.40 Handson 1.10 Zeredar 1.40 Time Enough 2.15 Runaway Pete 2.45 Lebedinski 3.20 Mr Conductor 3.55 Danzante

GOING: Good to Firm. ■ Left-hand course. Run-in of 240 yards.
■ Course is W of city on B4005. Buses from Warwick (1m) & Leamington Spa (2m). ADMISSION: Club £12 (16 to 24-year-olds £6): Tattersalls £8; Course £5. CAR PARK: £3.

SIS | RACING CHANNEL

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Chillington (2.45).
WINNERS IN LAST SEVEN DAYS: Zeredar (1.10) won at Worcester last Saturday.
LONG DISTANCE RUNNERS: Elite Governor (3.20) has been sent 199 miles by N Lampard from Kingsbridge, Devon.

12.40 CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS' HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS F) £2,650 added 2m

1	2-55151	PEGASUS BAY (9) (D) D Cantillon 5 12 0	G Hogan
2	64P513	STAY WITH ME (9) (D) C Egerton 6 12 0	Michael Brennan
3	122221	PAIR OF JACKS (IRE) (8) (D) G L Moore 6 11 12	M Attwater (8)
4	0F432 3	HANDSON (10) B Millman 4 11 8	D Salter (5)
5	111P-3P	NEWHALL PRINCE (14) (D) A Streeter 8 11 7	L Aspell B
6	52215-0	SALISONG (8) (CD) John Whyte 7 11 5	C Rae (3)
7	60513-6	SAN DIEGO CHARGER (14) (D) A Barrow 5 11 4	Sophie Mitchell
8	220636-	SUPERMICK (154) W Muir 5 11 0	A Bates
9	P51-322	GAME DILEMMA (68) J Mullins 5 11 0	O Burrows (3)
10	04-65	WATER HAZARD (11) S Dow 4 10 13	R Elkins (10)
11	340/4-42	GLOWING PATH (10) (D) R Hodges 6 10 10	J Harris (8)
12	556434	RAY RIVER (49) (D) K Wingrove 4 10 10	R Massey B
13	0006-	OUT OF THE BLUE (206) M Eckley 4 10 0	I Mogford (5)

– 13 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Out Of The Blue 9st 13lb.

BETTING: 4-1 Handson, 5-1 Pegasus Bay, 6-1 Stay With Me, Pair of Jacks, 8-1 Game Dilemma, 10-1 Supermick, 12-1 Newhall Prince, 14-1 others

1.10 ARNOLD LODGE SCHOOL HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £4,500 added 2m

1	51404-1	ZEREDAR (NZ) (7) (D) K Bailey 6 12 0	J Osborne
2	023-313	NORTHERN OPTIMIST (14) (D) B Llewellyn 8 11 1	Mr J L Llewellyn
3	431123	SUPER SHARP (NZ) (21) (D) H Oliver 8 11 0	Jacqui Oliver
4	3-44231	CIRCULATION (18) (D) D McCain 10 10 0	D Walsh (3) V

– 4 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Circulation 9st 12lb.

BETTING: Evens Zeredar, 3-1 Northern Optimist, 7-2 Super Sharp, 8-1 Circulation

1.40 BSPH HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £7,000 added to stakes 3m 2f

1	PU125/1-	COPPER MINE (364) (CD) O Sherwood 10 12 0	J Osborne
2	31P3-22	TIME ENOUGH (11) C Brooks 7 10 3	J F Titley
3	4136P-	CROPREDY LAD (190) P Webber 9 10 1	A Thornton
4	4505-6P	ELLTEE-ESS (6) R Weaver 11 10 0	C R Weaver (7) V

– 4 declared –

BETTING: Evens Time Enough, 7-4 Copper Mine, 6-1 Cropredy Lad, 12-1 Elltee-Ess

2.15 TENSATOR HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,000 added 2m 3f

1	20614-F	DJAIS (FR) (128) (C) J Jenkins 7 11 10	J Titley
2	03P012-	RUNAWAY PETE (154) (D) M Pipe 6 11 10	D Walsh (3)
3	0340-4U	MORSTOCK (7) R Hodges 6 11 1	T Dascombe (3)
4	5/632P-	GRAND APPLAUSE (380) M Saleman 6 10 8	D Bridgwater
5	4063/-14	SLEEPTITE (FR) (3) W G M Turner 6 10 0	J Power (7)

– 5 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Sleeptite 9st 4lb.

BETTING: 5-4 Runaway Pete, 5-2 Djais, 9-2 Morstock, 6-1 Grand Applause, 16-1 Sleeptite

2.45 ST MARY'S SELLING HURDLE (CLASS G) £2,450 added 3YO 2m

1		BLUNTSWOOD HALL R Hollinshead 10 12	Gary Lyons
2	0	CHILLINGTON (23) W Brisbourne 10 12	S Wynne B
3	0	COLOUR COUNSELLOR (11) R M Flower 10 12	D Fortt (3)
4		IN CAHOOTS A Smith 10 12	F Jousset
5		STORM WIND K Burke 10 12	A Larnach
6	0	THE GREY WEAVER (11) R Flower 10 12	J K McCarthy (7)
7		BITES T Bill 10 7	J Railton
8	0	BRIN-LODGE (16) K Bridgwater 10 7	V Slattery
9		FIJON J Pearce 10 7	V Smith
10	2035	HOW COULD-I (11) Mrs N Macauley 10 7	A Thornton B
11	233	INDIRA (16) C Popham 10 7	T Dascombe (3)
12	03	KAI'S LADY (21) S Campion 10 7	P Midgley (3)
13	0	LADY MAGNUM (16) J Neville 10 7	D Bridgwater
14	3	LEBEDINSKI (66) Mrs P Sly 10 7	R Marley
15		LENNOX LADY K Wingrove 10 7	J Ryan
16		SHANOORA Mrs N Macauley 10 7	E Husband (3)

– 16 declared –

BETTING: 3-1 Lebedinski, 7-2 How Could-I, 6-1 Indira, Fijon, 8-1 In Cahoots, 12-1 others

3.20 OFFCHURCH NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £5,100 added 2m 4f 110yds

1	U-2	ELITE GOVERNOR (11) N Lampard 7 11 0	Chris Webb (5)
2	2FU342-	HAWAIIAN SAM (208) A Turnell 6 11 0	G Crone
3	544400/-	LUCKNAM DREAMER (549) Mrs B Waring 8 11 0	E Byrne
4	3446-32	MR CONDUCTOR (21) R Alner 5 10 13	A Thornton
5	P-5	SPORTING FIXTURE (22) P Eccles 5 10 13	J A McCarthy

– 5 declared –

BETTING: 5-4 Hawaiian Sam, 6-4 Mr Conductor, 6-1 Elite Governor, 12-1 Lucknam Dreamer, Sporting Fixture

3.55 WEATHERBYS 'STARS OF TOMORROW' NH FLAT RACE (CLASS H) £1,550 added 2m

1		ABYSS N Littmoden 4 11 4	Mr D Verco
2	0-	BECKY'S LAD (360) Mrs D Thomas 6 11 4	Guy Lewis (3)
3		DANZANTE R Stronge 4 11 4	D Walsh (3)
4		DITOPERO W G M Turner 4 11 4	N Willmington (7)
5		HONEST GEORGE K Bridgwater 5 11 4	R Massey (3)
6		LAIRD O'RHYNIE K Wingrove 4 11 4	Mr A Wintle (7)
7	00	NANJIZAL (16) K Bridgwater 4 11 4	Michael Brennan (5)

– 7 declared –

BETTING: 2-1 Honest George, 3-1 Ditopero, 5-1 Nanjizal, 7-1 Abyss, 8-1 Danzante, Laird O'Rhynie, 10-1 Becky's Lad

KELSO

HYPERION

1.00 Scrabo View 1.30 Antarctic Wind 2.00 Prince Skyburd 2.30 Flyaway Blues 3.00 Tighter Budget 3.30 Exemplar 4.00 Nonios

GOING: Good (Good to Firm in places).
■ Left-hand, undulating course. Run-in of two furlongs.
■ Course is N of town off B6401. ADMISSION: Club £12; Tattersalls £7 (OAPs £4, under-16s free). CAR PARK: Free.

SIS

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Kashana (visored, 2.30).
WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: None.
LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Ethical Note (1.30), Regal Romper (2.00), Celtic Silver (3.00) and Exemplar (3.30) have been sent 175 miles by Mrs S Smith, High Eldwick, W Yorks.

1.00 ISLE OF SKYE BLENDED SCOTCH WHISKY NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £4,200 added 3m 1f

1	0-3121	SCRABO VIEW (21) (D) P Beaumont 8 12 0	R Supple B
2	521-255	MOVAC (7) Miss L V Russell 7 11 8	M Moloney
3	003-130	GERMAN LEGEND (21) D Lamb 6 10 12	J Burke
4	0524-37	MR REINER (7) J Wade 8 10 12	K Jones
5	52-3333	WHITE DIAMOND (14) Miss L V Russell 8 10 11	P Niven V
6	04P260-	SEEKING GOLD (171) J Barclay 7 10 4	B Storey
7	U3253P	ALICHARGER (7) P Monteith 6 10 2	A Dobbin
8	00-403-	MISTER TRICK (200) L Lungo 6 10 0	M Foster
9	430-311	DONOVANS REEF (57) (CD) Mrs L Marshall 10 10 0	K Johnson
10	30P-044	BRIGHT DESTINY (14) J Goldie 5 10 0	D Parker

– 10 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Mister Trick 9st 9lb. Donovans Reef 9st 7lb. Bright Destiny 9st 4lb

BETTING: 7-4 Scrabo View, 5-1 Movac, Mister Trick, 6-1 German Legend, 8-1 Seeking Gold, 12-1 White Diamond, Alicharger, 16-1 others

1.30 ROSALIND BIRTHDAY 'NH' NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 2m 6f 110yds

1	1500-22	ANTARCTIC WIND (17) M Hammond 6 10 12	R Garritty
2	03200-U	BARNSTORMER (6) E Elliott 10 10 12	D Parker
3	0P	ETHICAL NOTE (201) Mrs S Smith 5 10 12	Richard Guest
4	0 5	FASTER RON (7) R Allan 5 10 12	S Melrose (7)
5	600-540	I'M THE MAN (14) Mrs E Slack 5 10 12	K Johnson
6	40	MILLENNIUM MAN (17) E Weymes 5 10 12	J Callaghan
7	0-	SELDOM BUT SEVERE (357) E Elliott 6 10 12	K Jones
8	30264-6	TRAP DANCER (7) P Monteith 8 10 12	A Dobbin
9	2-42	PROFIT AND LOSS (77) F Murphy 5 10 7	Mr K Whelan
10	0P4-PP0	WHIRLWIND ROMANCE (6) W Kemp 5 10 7	S McDougall

– 10 declared –

BETTING: 5-4 Antarctic Wind, 7-2 Profit And Loss, 6-1 Trap Dancer, 10-1 Millennium Man, 12-1 Faster Ron, Whirlwind Romance, 16-1 others

2.00 NEWTON INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS D) £6,000 added 2m 1f

1	2P202-3	REGAL ROMPER (21) (D) Mrs S Smith 8 12 0	R Wilkinson (7)
2	F01515-	WEAVER GEORGE (157) (D) W Storey 6 11 6	M Moloney
3	01435-4	FLASH OF REALM (22) B Mactaggart 10 11 3	B Storey V
4	P00-111	PRINCE SKYBURD (21) (D) Mrs P Aeson 5 10 13	E Callaghan (5)
5	331310-	BRIAR'S DELIGHT (171) (CD) R Allan 8 10 10	B Harding V

– 5 declared –

BETTING: 7-4 Prince Skyburd, 7-2 Briar's Delight, 4-1 Regal Romper, 9-2 Flash of Realm, 6-1 Weaver George

2.30 HARROW HOTEL (DALKEITH) NOVICE SELLING HURDLE (CLASS G) £3,000 added 2m 110yds

1	004-	ASTRAL WEEKS (192) L Lungo 5 10 12	M Foster
2	P-	BARIK (200) B Mactaggart 6 10 12	B Storey
3	00-	BATTERY BOY (343) W Elsey 4 10 12	Doubtful
4	F64	FLYAWAY BLUES (14) Mrs M Reveley 4 10 12	P Niven
5	05-0	MARY'S CASE (295) Mrs J Goodfellow 6 10 12	T Reed
6	0-	MOOFAJI (277) F Watson 5 10 12	J Callaghan
7	P0'	PUBLIC WAY (1,016) N Chamberlain 6 10 12	Miss C Metcalfe (7)
8	000-0	SECONDS AWAY (6) J Goldie 5 10 12	G Lee (3)
9	5634-50	STYLISH INTERVAL (8) N Waggott 4 10 12	A Dobbin
10	R6	KASHANA (49) W Storey 4 10 7	M Moloney V
11	64035	LITTLE REDWING (7) M Hammond 4 10 7	R Garritty B
12	00-65	WALK IN THE WILD (14) D Nolan 4 10 7	S McDougall

– 12 declared –

BETTING: 5-2 Astral Weeks, 7-2 Flyaway Blues, 6-1 Stylish Interval, 7-1 Little Redwing, 14-1 Mary's Case, Kashana, 16-1 others

3.00 SALVESEN FOOD SERVICES HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS D) £7,500 2m 6f 110yds

1	0053-41	BAS DE LAINE (14) (C) M Hammond 10 11 12	R Garritty B
2	22121P-	STOP THE WALLER (196) F Murphy 7 11 11	Mr K Whelan
3	12-F034	CROSS CANNON (17) J Wade 10 11 8	K Jones
4	11231P	ROYAL VACATION (14) (C) G Moore 7 11 7	J Callaghan
5	23F0-44	BALYARA (91) (D) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 2	P Niven
6	134-111	TIGHTER BUDGET (14) (C) Mrs H Sayer 9 11 1	M Moloney
7	123222-	GOLDEN FIDDLE (161) J Oliver 8 10 12	B Storey
8	1453P-3	CELTIC SILVER (11) (C) Mrs S Smith 8 10 0	Richard Guest
9	034515-	GALA WATER (206) T Dun 10 10 0	R Supple

– 9 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True weight: Celtic Silver 9st 13lb. Gala Water 9st 11lb.

BETTING: 5-2 Tighter Budget, 4-1 Bas de Laine, 9-2 Stop The Waller, 7-1 Balyara, 8-1 Royal Vacation, Golden Fiddle, Celtic Silver, 12-1 others

3.30 OOH AAH DAILY STAR HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS D) £5,000 2m 6f 110yds

1	21-4F14	TALLYWAGGER (23) (BF) G Moore 9 12 0	T Hogg (7)
2	01221P-	RALITSA (157) (C) M Hammond 4 10 12	R Garritty
3	004-60-1	ILENGAR (14) (CD) Mrs J Goodfellow 7 10 7	E Callaghan (5)
4	301-261	NICHOLAS PLANT (14) (CD) J Goldie 7 10 6	G Lee (3)
5	00010-	BARK'N'BITE (240) Mrs M Reveley 4 10 5	P Niven
6	3620-53	EXEMPLAR (7) (CD) Mrs S Smith 8 10 0	Richard Guest
7	360104-	D'ARBLAY STREET (208) W Kemp 7 10 0	S McDougall
8	4291P7-	MARLINGFORD (757) (C) Mrs J Jordan 9 10 0	S Taylor (5)

– 8 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: D'Arblay Street 9st 10lb. Marlingford 9st 1lb.

BETTING: 5-2 Tallywagger, 7-2 Nicholas Plant, 4-1 Bark'n'bite, 5-1 Ralitsa, 7-1 Ilengar, 8-1 Exemplar, 14-1 others.

4.00 LEVY BOARD CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 2m 110yds

1	20215-P	URBAN DANCING (18) (D) B Ellison 7 12 0	D J Kavanagh
2	411-333	EDEN DANCER (14) (D) Mrs M Reveley 4 11 10	C McCormack (5)
3	033-222	NONIOS (14) (C) G Moore 5 11 2	T Hogg (5) V
4	3-54415	WELL APPOINTED (7) B Mactaggart 7 11 1	S Melrose (5)
5	0256-24	FEN TERRIER (7) (D) F Murtagh 4 10 10	E Callaghan
6	304F-	NOGRAN (658) A Whillans 5 10 0	S Taylor
7	426	PANGERAN (USA) (17) Mrs A Swinbank 4 10 0	J Supple
8	0UPP-	KEMO SABO (170) C Parker 4 10 0	D Parker
9	5353-23	TEEJAY'N'AITCH (6) J Goldie 4 10 0	G Lee

– 9 declared –

Minimum: 10st. True weights: Kemo Sabo 9st 12lb, Teejay'n'Aitch 9st 9lb.

BETTING: 5-2 Nonios, 3-1 Eden Dancer, 4-1 Fen Terrier, 6-1 Well Appointed, 8-1 Urban Dancing, 12-1 Teejay'n'aitch, Pangeran, 16-1 others

WOLVERHAMPTON

HYPERION

7.00 Cee-n-K 7.30 Honestly 8.00 Two To Tango 8.30 Jimmy The Skunk 9.00 Verinder's Gift 9.30 Dragonjoy

GOING: Standard.
STALLS: 7f – outside; remainder – inside.
DRAW ADVANTAGE: High from 6f to 1m 4f.
■ Fibresand surface; left-hand, oval course.
■ Course is N of town on A449. Wolverhampton station 1m. ADMISSION: Club £15; Tattersalls £6 (OAP members of Diamond Club £4); Viewing Restaurant £25.90 including entrance and meal. CAR PARK: Free.

SIS

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Spondulicks (visored, 9.00); Jamie's Boy (blinkered, 7.00), Neon Deion (blinkered, 9.00).
WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: None.
LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Western Venture (9.30) sent 264 miles by R McKellar from Lesmahagow, Strathclyde; Barachois Lad (9.00) sent 181 miles by J J O'Neill from Skelton Wood End, Cumbria.

7.00 PENDEFORD MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS E) £4,000 added 2YO 6f

1	0	AGENT MULDER (31) P Cundell 9 0	A McGlone 1
2	04	CEE-N-K (10) M Johnston 9 0	J Fanning 4
3	0	FLY ME HOME (82) B McMahon 9 0	L Newton (5) 10
4	465	HARMONY IN RED (100) J Berry 9 0	G Carter 12
5		HENLEY (USA) D Loder 9 0	D R McCabe 13
6	5030	JAMIE'S BOY (4) R Guest 9 0	J Quinn 5 B
7	000	LOCHINVAR (12) J Moore 9 0	J F Egan 9
8	0	SWYNFORD CHARMER (16) J Bottomley 9 0	L Charnock 7
9	63	TRAILBLAZER (24) (BF) C Thornton 9 0	Dean McKeown 11
10	2600	CHILLING (81) P Murphy 8 9	S Drowne 8
11	50	COLINS CHOICE (175) J Spearing 8 9	F Lynch (3) 2
12	0	MYTHICAL (45) Sir Mark Prescott 8 9	G Duffield 6
13	0	YABINT EL SULTAN (5) B McMahon 8 9	S Sanders 3

– 13 declared –

BETTING: 5-2 Henley, 9-2 Jamie's Boy, 5-1 Cee-N-K, 6-1 Trailblazer, 7-1 Harmony in Red, 14-1 Mythical, 16-1 others

7.30 SHIFNAL CLAIMING STAKES (CLASS F) £3,250 added 1m 4f

1	050-446	MAD MILITANT (15) (CD) A Streeter 7 9 6	R Havlin (3) 7
2	113056	PHARLY DANCER (14) (D) W Haigh 7 9 6	L Newton (5) 6
3	3114-20	PRINCELY GAIT (115) (D) M Polglase 5 9 6	M Rimmer 5
4	53000	SWYNFORD SUPREME (36) J Bottomley 3 9 4	L Charnock 2
5	400500	HAND OF STRAW (18) (C) P Murphy 4 9 2	S Drowne 8 V
6	121335-	MR BEAN (357) (CD) K Burke 6 9 2	R Painter (5) 4
7	335000	HILL FARM DANCER (25) (CD) W Brisbourne 5 9 1	Martin Dwyer (5) 3
8	41-4600	HONESTLY (18) (C) B Smart 3 8 13	M Tebbutt 1
9	000025	ROSE OF GLENN (18) (D) B Palling 5 8 13	T Sprake 10
10	25462-0	ROUSITTO (28) (CD) R Hollinshead 8 8 10	F Lynch (3) 9
11	400000	JON'S CHOICE (91) (C) B Preece 8 8 8	V Slattery 12
12		LOCHWOOD A Bailey 3 8 7	S Sanders 11

– 12 declared –

BETTING: 3-1 Mad Militant, 5-1 Princely Gait, 6-1 Honestly, 7-1 Hill Farm Dancer, 8-1 Pharly Dancer, Mr Bean, 12-1 others

8.00 CHARLECOTE MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS E) £4,000 3YO 1m 100yds

1		DARATOWN P Evans 9 0	J Fortune 3
2	00-0640	DINO'S MISTRAL (16) F Lee 9 0	G Carter 8
3	030000	INAMINIT (25) H Collingridge 9 0	J Quinn 6 B
4	420-000	NAME OF OUR FATHER (4) P Bowen 9 0	P P Murphy (5) 10
5		STRETCHING A Bailey 9 0	W Hollick 4
6	0304	BALINSKY (19) J Berry 8 9	P Roberts (5) 7
7	5	CARREAMIA (25) J L Eyre 8 9	R Lappin 2
8	064000	CERISE (34) W Elsey 8 9	Martin Dwyer (5) 12 B
9		DERI SUE B Llewellyn 8 9	T Williams 5
10	00-40	SMILING BESS (47) R Hollinshead 8 9	F Lynch (3) 1
11	60	SOUL SISTER (56) D Haydn Jones 8 9	M Fenton 11
12		SOUNDS LEGAL P Evans 8 9	J F Egan 13
13	5	TWO TO TANGO (10) J Gosden 8 9	G Hind 9

– 13 declared –

BETTING: 7-4 Two To Tango, 5-1 Carreamia, 6-1 Name of Our Father, 8-1 Balinsky, 12-1 Inaminit, Smiling Bess, 14-1 others

8.30 CASTLECROFT HANDICAP (CLASS E) £4,000 added 7f

1	000602	SHARP 'N SMART (12) (D) B Smart 4 10 0	M Tebbutt 8
2	560000	ENCORE M'LADY (14) (C) (D) F Lee 5 9 10	A Culhane 1
3	344200	FOUR OF SPADES (45) (CD) R Hodges 5 9 9	Amanda Sanders (5) 7 V
4	044355	ANONYM (14) (D) D Nicholls 4 9 8	Alex Greaves 6 B
5	2-23331	JIMMY THE SKUNK (11) (C) (D) P Evans 5 9 6	J F Egan 12
6	406020	BOLD STREET (11) (C) (D) A Bailey 6 9 6	D Wright (3) 10 B
7	003100	SEA SPOUSE (82) (D) M Blanshard 5 9 6	Kerry Baker (7) 5
8	001500	JIGSAW BOY (56) (CD) (BF) P Murphy 7 9 6	S Drowne 4
9	041004	NO MONKEY NUTS (6) J Berry 3 9 4	G Carter 11
10	411202	PRINCESS EFISIO (28) (C) B McMahon 3 9 3	S Sanders 3
11	300060	RESPECTABLE JONES (105) (D) R Hollinshead 10 8 10	Lisa Watson (7) 9
12	435415	SILVER HARROW (8) (D) A Newcombe 3 8 10	D Griffiths 2

– 12 declared –

BETTING: 3-1 Anonym, 7-2 Princess Efisio, 4-1 Sharp 'n Smart, 6-1 Jimmy The Skunk, 10-1 Four Of Spades, Silver Harrow, 12-1 others

9.00 MIDLAND BAR SELLING NURSERY HANDICAP (CLASS F) £3,500 2YO 1m 100yds

1	521205	GROVEFAIR DANCER (14) (C) Miss S Wilton 9 7	S Whitworth 7
2	255430	SPONDULICKS (39) B Baugh 9 6	Iona Wands (7) 8 V
3	62500	BALI-PET (19) W Turner 9 3	D Sweeney (7) 12 B
4	00400	RUNNING FREE (29) M Fetherston-Godley 9 2	J Fortune 13 B
5	215220	JINGOIST (29) J L Harris 9 1	S Sanders 2 B
6	40006	NEON DEION (59) S Williams 9 1	Darren Williams (7) 6 B
7	002	VERINDER'S GIFT (24) Dr J Scargill 8 13	F Lynch (3) 5
8	043055	LYCIUS TOUCH (40) M Johnston 8 9	T Williams 1
9	045005	BALLYDINERO (19) Capt J Wilson 8 8	Dean McKeown 11
10	630	TAZIO NUVOLARI (14) W Turner 8 7	D McGaffin (7) 9
11	026000	DANCING STAR (28) P Evans 8 6	J F Egan 10
12	6060	BARACHOIS LAD (65) J J O'Neill 8 2	J Quinn 3
13	6800	MORRITT MAGIC (12) C Thornton 8 0	N Carlisle 4

– 13 declared –

BETTING: 9-2 Verinder's Gift, 5-1 Spondulicks, 6-1 Jingoist, 8-1 Neon Deion, Ballydinero, 10-1 Grovefair Dancer, Lycius Touch, 12-1 others

9.30 WEST MIDLANDS HANDICAP (CLASS F) £3,200 added 6f

1	34-06	INCATINKA (150) J Spearing 3 9 12	S Drowne 8
2	500100	HOW'S YER FATHER (11) (D) R Hodges 10 9 10	Amanda Sanders (5) 5
3	000300	CHEEKY CHAPPY (5) (C) (D) D Chapman 5 9 10	A Culhane 13 B
4	003006	ANITA'S CONTESSA (42) B Palling 4 9 8	T Sprake 3
5	312010	DELROB (28) (CD) D Haydn Jones 5 9 9	M Fenton 6 B
6	002244	DISCO BOY (33) (C) P Evans 6 9 8	J F Egan 7
7	000005	PLAYMAKER (14) D Nicholls 3 9 8	Alex Greaves 10
8	062200	WESTERN VENTURE (5) R McKellar 3 9 8	T Williams 11
9	003304	POLAR REFRAIN (8) C Dwyer 3 9 7	C Dwyer 1
10	6132-00	LADY ECLAT (14) (CD) J Glover 3 9 7	S D Williams 2 B
11	056003	DRAGONJOY (29) (C) N Littmoden 3 9 6	A McGlone 4 V
12	4230/3-0	GALACIA (47) W Turner 4 9 6	D Sweeney (7) 9
13	654050	MARINO STREET (8) P Evans 3 9 6	J Fortune 12 V

– 13 declared –

BETTING: 3-1 Cheeky Chappy, 4-1 Delrob, 5-1 Disco Boy, 6-1 Polar Refrain, 7-1 How's Yer Father, 10-1 Anita's Contessa, 12-1 others

RACING RESULTS

NEWMARKET

12.50: 1. **KUMAIT** (L Dettori) 7-2; 2. **Elnadim** evens fav; 3. **Zaahir** 4-1. 11 ran. 1¼, 3. (Saeed bin Suroor, Newmarket). Tote: £3.60; £1.10, £1.60, £1.80. Dual Forecast: £2.10. Computer Straight Forecast: £6.87. Trio: £1.70.

1.20: 1. **RIVER USK** (W Ryan) 6-1; 2. **Barnum Sands** 4-9 fav; 3. **Our People** 7-2. 4 ran. Hd, 2¾. (H Cecil, Newmarket). After a stewards' inquiry, placings unaltered. Tote: Win £5.00. Dual Forecast: £2.00. Computer Straight Forecast: £9.24.

1.55: 1. **PROPER BLUE** (S Sanders) 15-2; 2. **Multicoloured** 4-1; 3. **Clifton Fox** 5-1. 8 ran. 5-2 fav Bright Water. Nk, nk. (T Mills, Epsom). Tote: £7.20; £2.20, £1.60, £1.50. DF: £18.20. CSF: £33.08.

2.30: 1. **ORCHESTRA STALL** (T Quinn) 7-2 fav; 2. **Leonato** 25-1; 3. **Zaforum** 10-1. 11 ran. 1¾, 2½. (J Dunlop, Arundel). Tote: £3.80; £1.80, £3.50, £3.40. Dual Forecast: £56.60. CSF: £70.65. Tricast: £727.24. Trio: £721.90.

3.05: 1. **ELLENS LAD** (Pat Eddery) 11-4 fav; 2. **Kilcullen Lad** 6-1; 3. **Gaelic Storm** 7-2. 8 ran. ¾, 1¼. (R Hannon, East Everleigh). Tote: £3.00; £1.30, £1.80, £1.90. Dual Forecast: £8.80. CSF: £17.74. Tricast: £52.16.

3.40: 1. **SILVRETTA** (M Roberts) 12-1; 2. **Dalwhinnie** 25-1; 3. **Temptress** 14-1. 4. **Totally Yours** 6-1 17 ran. 5-1 fav Glow Forum. ⅔, sht-hd. (A Stewart, Newmarket). Tote: £12.40; £2.40, £5.50, £3.40. £2.10. DF: £170.80. CSF: £248.57. Tricast: £3,836.89. Trio: £388.40.

4.15: 1. **WHISPERING DAWN** (P P Murphy) 14-1; 2. **Peppers** 25-1; 3. **Allstars Rocket** 12-1. 4 **Dauphin** 10-1. 21 ran. 7-1 fav Loch Style. Nk, ½. (M Channon, Upper Lambourn). Tote: £11.80; £2.80, £7.90, £2.80, £4.00. DF: £156.60. Computer Straight Forecast: £311.94. Tricast: £3,948.09. Trio: £1,273.60.

Jackpot: Not won; £10,650.09 carried forward to Newmarket today.

Placepot: £227.00. **Quadpot:** £28.80. **Place 6:** £205.13. **Place 5:** £201.44.

WETHERBY

1.30: 1. **EL DON** (K Gaule) 11-4; 2. **Highbank** 9-1; 3. **Elpidos** 4-1. 7 ran. 5-2 fav Mim-Lou-And (4th). ¾, ¾. (M Ryan, Newmarket). Tote: £4.60; £1.10, £3.90. Dual Forecast: £19.90. CSF: £23.10.

2.00: 1. **GOLDEN HELLO** (L Wyer) 8-13 fav; 2. **Chorus Line** 4-1; 3. **Kilcolla** 7-1. 4 ran. 16, 21. (T Easterby, Malton). Tote: £1.50. DF: £2.80. CSF: £3.19.

2.35: 1. **BURNT IMP** (J Callaghan) 5-1; 2. **Tara Rambler** 13-2; 3. **Dally Boy** 4-1. 5 ran. 15-8 fav Admirals Seat (pulled up). Hd, 2. (G M Moore, Middleham). Tote: £8.00; £2.60, £1.80. DF: £13.40. CSF: £29.32.

3.10: 1. **REGAL ROMPER** (Richard Guest) 6-1; 2. **Aljadeer** 3-1; 3. **Political Tower** 5-4 fav. 4 ran. ¾, 2½. (Mrs S Smith, Bingley). Tote: £5.30. DF: £6.10. CSF: £20.32.

3.45: 1. **THE LAST FLING** (Richard Guest) 5-6 fav; 2. **Chopwell Curtains** 11-4; 3. **Young Dubliner** 3-1. 4 ran. 3, 14. (Mrs S Smith, Bingley). Tote: £2.00. DF: £2.60. CSF: £3.40.

4.20: 1. **QUEEN'S AWARD** (M Griffiths) 20-1; 2. **Mister Blake** 9-1; 3. **Pebble Beach** 2-1 jt fav. 6 ran. 2-1 jt fav Smart Approach (4th). 15, 2. (R Buckler, Bridport). Tote: £26.80; £6.20, £2.20. DF: £49.40. CSF: £146.59.

Placepot: £8,366.70. **Quadpot:** £1,003.10 – part won: £366.02 carried forward.
Place 6: £9,890.26. **Place 5:** £4,199.85.

BANGOR

1.10: 1. **INDRAPURA** (A P McCoy) 1-2 fav; 2. **Night Boat** 11-1; 3. **Milling Brook** 50-1. 12 ran. 1¼, 21. (M Pipe). Tote: £1.40; £1.10, £2.00, £4.50. Dual Forecast: £5.50. Computer Straight Forecast: £7.16. Trio: £51.30. NRs: Bargash, Oakbury.

1.40: 1. **MAJOR BELL** (B Harding) 9-2; 2. **Flapjack Lad** 7-1; 3. **Rustic Air** 12-1. 8 ran. 2-1 fav Garrylough. 2½, 1½. (A Whillans). Tote: £5.20; £1.40, £1.40, £2.80. Dual Forecast: £22.40. CSF: £32.66. Tricast: £321.43.

2.10: 1. **AROUND THE GALE** (R Dunwoody) 4-5 fav; 2. **Rafters** 25-1; 3. **Monymoss** 33-1. 11 ran. 12, 1½. (D Gandolfo). Tote: £1.90; £1.10, £1.90, £3.60. DF: £18.20. CSF: £20.43. Trio: £93.40.

2.45: 1. **CASSIO'S BOY** (D J Kavanagh) 10-1; 2. **Zingibar** 6-1; 3. **Batty's Island** 25-1. 10 ran. 9-4 fav Ramsdens. Hd, 16. (R Eckley). Tote: £14.20; £3.90, £2.10, £4.70. DF: £44.80. CSF: £63.88. Tricast: £1,337.92. Trio: £85.50.

3.20: 1. **BASILICUS** (R Wilkinson) 20-1; 2. **Bally Clover** 11-2; 3. **Leinthall Princess** 25-1. 14 ran. 6-4 fav Ivy House. 13, ¾. (Mrs S Smith). Tote: £29.80; £5.00, £2.30, £3.90. DF: £112.60. CSF: £123.00. Tricast: £2,568.84. Trio: £450.70.

3.55: 1. **CENTAUR EXPRESS** (T Eley) 10-3 fav; 2. **Tanseeq** 11-2; 3. **Cooley's Valve** 6-1. 10 ran. 7, 9. (A Streeter). Tote: £4.40; £2.00, £2.30, £2.60. DF: £15.30. Computer Straight Forecast: £20.46. Tricast: £95.67.

4.30: 1. **JOHNNY-K** (R Massey) 13-8 fav; 2. **Welsh Silk** 12-1; 3. **Zander** 6-1. 18 ran. 9, 4. (D Nicholson). Tote: £2.70; £2.20, £3.30, £2.20. DF: £24.50. CSF: £22.15. Trio: £47.40.

Placepot: £324.80. **Quadpot:** £201.10. **Place 6:** £283.04. **Place 5:** £213.60.

هكذا من الاجل

مكرر من الاصل

Ali-Royal to keep Cecil's ambitions alive

Racing

RICHARD EDMONDSON

Swirling leaves apart, there is beautiful evidence of the pattern of the seasons this afternoon. The seven races of an immature National Hunt campaign at Ascot produce just 30 runners, while a single event at Newmarket, the Burrough Green Handicap (Class D), involves just one fewer.

This is the stage of the Flat season when the only sound in yards around the country is the banging of stable doors. The ground is good, the finishing line is in sight, and the legions of horses who are below top class are being sent out to play. This phenomenon makes punting an even more devilish occupation than usual.

Evidence of this is available in the closing two handicaps at Headquarters. These missions are so complex that if you find both winners you should certainly walk home, as a ruby will inevitably be twinkling up from the gutter. For those for whom gambling has become a problem, the best options may be **Artful Dane** (3.45), who has form with several of his opponents, and the Newbury winner **Amber Fort** (4.15).

There are two Listed contests for those who like to think of themselves as serious backers, and the main thread, as it has been for several days now, will be the battle for the trainers' championship between Henry Cecil and Saeed Bin Suroor. A win apiece at Newmarket yesterday failed to help Cecil close the gap. If the Warren Place man does not score with Ali-Royal in the Ben Marshall Stakes, he might as well climb into his top-of-the-range car and travel to the airport for a flight to the Caribbean to ponder what a desperate year it has been. Bin Suroor saddles Fatefully, one of the Dettori seven at Ascot five weeks ago, but she will do well to repel **Ali-Royal** (2.40), who is a better beast on the official ratings.

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Straight Talk
(Ascot 1.55)
NB: Eldorado
(Newmarket 3.10)

Mark Johnston likes to capture the Zetland Stakes, but has taken the unusual step of entering an animal without the prefix Double this year. Nevertheless, **Eldorado** (next best 3.10) showed at Bath on his debut that he has the promise to match the feats of the brothers Trigger and Eclipse.

At Ascot, the pinnacle event, the United House Construction Handicap Chase, features Big Matt and Storm Alert, who ran in the race last year. At these weights the latter is preferred, though **Uncle Ernie** (2.30), who has also had good days here, should take care of both of them.

Senor El Betrutti, one of the day's dashing greys, will be considered for the previous encounter as he gained two of his three wins last season at this track. The seven-year-old will employ the same tactics that the hare does around dog tracks.

Less keen may be Commercial Artist, who is liable to whinny the equine version of "stuff this for a game of soldiers", having refused on his first two outings last year. In the circumstances, **STRAIGHT TALK** (nap 1.55), who has had the benefit of a race this season, must have an outstanding chance.

The dashing grey One Man (3.25) reappears at Wetherby and is reported in spiffing form by his trainer, Gordon Richards. You can get 14-1 about the gelding for the Gold Cup and that will almost certainly contract after this afternoon's venture as he has won on his debut in each of the last three seasons.

As Barton Bank tends to have the effect of a grenade on at least one fence in each round, the one for the forecast may be Young Hustler.

Less predictable is the identity of One Man's jockey. Richard Dunwoody is expected to take the ride, but the Irishman again missed mounts yesterday as a consequence of the food poisoning he contracted earlier in the week.

Dunwoody should be back though – just as Danoli proved he was when winning on his chasing debut at Clonmel yesterday. The former invalid's doddle round persuaded Rob Hartnett of Coral to go 20-1 from 33-1 about Tom Foley's charge for the Cheltenham Gold Cup, which must mean, for the first time ever, that 1 April falls before the Festival.

UNITED HOUSE CHASE – 10-YEAR-TALE

	1986-87	'88	'89	'90	'91	'92	'93	'94	'95
Fate of the favourite:	3	2	2	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Winner's starting price:	12-2	[illegible]	6-1	100-30	[illegible]	[illegible]	2-1	[illegible]	[illegible]
Winner's place in betting:	6	9	1	5	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	2	[illegible]
Winner's weight:	10-7	10-7	11-10	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Profit or loss to £1 stake: Favourites +£2.95 [illegible]

Percentage of winners placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in previous race: [illegible]

Shortest-priced winner: Katabatic 2-1 (1992)

Longest-priced winner: Long Engagement 12-1 (1990)

Top trainer: [illegible] (2): Katabatic (1992), Storm Alert (1993 and 1994)

Top jockey: [illegible] (2): Katabatic (1992), Storm Alert (1993 and 1994)

TRAINERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

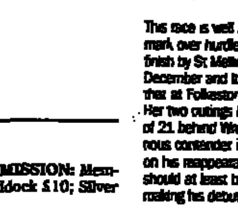
Henry Cecil	Saeed Bin Suroor
£1,909,298	£1,940,107

Bin Suroor leads by £30,809

TODAY

Cecil	Bin Suroor
Gingersnap Palisade (Newmarket 1.00) Ali-Royal (Newmarket 2.40)	Saheeel (Newmarket 2.05) Fatefully (Newmarket 2.40)

HYPERION'S TV TIPS



ASCOT

1.20: With so little form to analyse, any selection for this event is probably best left to paddock watchers. Ex-Irish bumper horse **AL HELAL** is only a tentative choice.

* * *

1.55: Susan Nock warned yesterday that although Senor El Betrutti is well, he needs this race and is not certain to stay the trip. Arthur's Minstrel will have no stamina problems but will also be short of full fitness. **STRAIGHT TALK** looks best of those with the benefit of a recent run.

2.30: A fascinating contest in which the three at the top of the handicap are expected to run well first time out. Jimmy FitzGerald asserts that Uncle Ernie is in "tremendous form" while reports from Lambourn suggest **Big Matt**, too, is ready for this. But on fast ground, **STORM ALERT** has the best credentials, having won this event in both 1993 and 1994.

WETHERBY

2.20: Bertone, having had two runs already this season, would seem to have a fitness advantage over his main rival **HILL OF TULLOW**. However, the latter is a classier animal and put up an excellent performance when winning first time out at Chepstow 12 months ago.

* * *

2.50: A tricky contest in which Trainglot will enjoy the sound surface. But Mouse Morris has sent over **WHAT A QUESTION** and this eight-year-old has proven form in Grade One staying races and looks best of the Irish-trained pair.

* * *

3.25: ONE MAN is taken on by three smart rivals but should still win.

* * *

4.00: Kerawi made an impressive debut at Newbury last week but **BELLATOR** has apparently been hurdling with fluency at home and could be better value.

NEWMARKET

2.40: CENTRE STALLS, who had improved with every run until flopping in France last time, can return to form at the expense of Henry Cecil's representative, Ali-Royal.

* * *

3.10: Barry Hills's horses remain in sparkling form and his **MY VALENTINA** should appreciate the step up in distance after an emphatic Chepstow success last time.

* * *

3.45: It should be close again between the three who filled the places in a race over this track and trip a fortnight ago, **Hawksley Hill**, **High Premium** and **Artful Dane**, but the progressive and well-drawn **ASHBY HILL** is just preferred.

* * *

4.15: Mud-lover **Charlie Sillett** is up only 3lb after success from a poor draw at Chepstow last time. But today's less testing surface may thwart him. Form figures for **KNOBBLEENEEZE** are uninspiring but this outsider could repay each-way support now that he's slipped to a winning handicap mark.

ASCOT

HYPERION

12.50 Squire's Occasion	3.05 Tap On Tootsie
1.20 Al Helal	3.40 Strong Promise
1.55 Straight Talk	4.10 Charming Girl
2.30 Storm Alert	

GOING: Good to Firm (Firm in places).

■ Right-hand course with stiff fences; testing uphill finish.

■ Course is nr junction of A329 and A330. Station adjoins course. ADMISSION: Members £16 (Junior Members 16-25 years, half price); Grandstand & Paddock £10; Silver Ring £3. CAR PARK: No's 1, 2 & 3 £4, remainder free.

SIS

■ **LEADING TRAINERS WITH RUNNERS: M Pipe** – 16 winners from 68 runners gives a success ratio of 23.1% and a profit to a £1 level stake of £11.72; **N Twiston-Davies** – 15 winners, 82 runners, 18.3%, +£16.21; **J Gifford** – 14 winners, 110 runners, 12.7%, -£36.26; **O Sherwood** – 13 winners, 54 runners, 24.1%, -£11.47.

■ **LEADING JOCKEYS: J Osborne** – 30 wins, 103 rides, 29.1%, +£42.83; **R Dunwoody** – 16 wins, 102 rides, 15.7%, -£46.61; **A Maguire** – 14 wins, 74 rides, 18.9%, -£12.34; **M A Fitzgerald** – 13 wins, 67 rides, 19.4%, +£21.58.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: None.

WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: Strong Promise (3.40) won at Cheltenham last Tuesday.

LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Uncleernie (2.30) has been sent 234 miles by J FitzGerald from Norton, N Yorks; **Tap On Tootsie** (3.05) sent 142 miles by T Wall from Church Stretton, Shropshire; **Ernest William** (1.20) and **Strong Promise** (3.40) sent 122 miles by G Hubbard from Worlingworth, Suffolk.

12.50 BINFIELD JUVENILE NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,000 added 3YO 2m 110yds Penalty Value £4,175

1 .3 SQUIRE'S OCCASION (CAN) (14) (Chelgate Public Relations) R Akehurst 11 0 ... A P McCoy
2 42F3 AMBER RING (21) (Pine Crest Rating) Miss K George 10 9 ... J R Kavanagh

– 2 declared –

BETTING: 2-7 Squire's Occasion, 5-2 Amber Ring.

1995: Ocean Hawk (USA) 3 11 0 C Maude 14-1 (N Twiston-Davies) 8 ran

1.20 UNITED HOUSE DEVELOPMENT NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,000 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £3,469 BBC1

1 6- AL HELAL (162) (Miss J L Watson) J Jenkins 4 11 0 ... A P McCoy
2 00-F ERNEST WILLIAM (22) (G A Hubbard) G Hubbard 4 11 0 ... K Gaule (3)
3 35- RIDING CROP (214) (The Barrow Boys) N Henderson 6 11 0 ... M A Fitzgerald
4 SAHEL (Pipers Partnership) J Mullins 8 11 0 ... S Curran
5 0/40- CIPRIANI QUEEN (294) (Tor Royal Racing Club) J Gifford 6 10 9 ... P Hide
6 LIZIUM (A W Wayman) J Fox 4 10 9 ... S Fox

– 6 declared –

BETTING: 7-4 Riding Crop, 5-2 Cipriani Queen, 5-1 Sahel, 6-1 Al Helal, 8-1 Ernest William, 10-1 Lizium.

1995: Speedwell Prince 5 11 4 C Maude 6-1 (N Twiston-Davies) 11 ran

FORM GUIDE

This race is well below Ascot standards and offers **RIDING CROP** an heaven-sent opportunity to get off the mark over hurdles at the first time of asking. He put in a most encouraging first run when beaten in a tight finish by St Mellion Drive and Euphonic Illusion for a NH Flat race on good to soft ground at Nottingham last December and it was presumably the four-month break rather than the faster going why he was well below that at Folkestone in April. **Cipriani Queen** hasn't been rushed and should have a fair amount of scope. Her two outings last season were in much stronger company than this and there was enough in her fourth of 21 behind Wren Warbler in a mares' hurdle on soft ground at Worcester in November to make her a serious contender in this grade. **Ernest William** was well there until falling at halfway at Huntingdon (2m4f) on his reappearance. Further evidence is needed, but he appeared to be running his best race so far and should at least be open to a fair bit of improvement. He'd have to be a danger. **Sahel** is an eight-year-old making his debut over hurdles and has been off the course for so long that the last person to ride him was Steve Cauthen at Newmarket four years ago. He was a fair handicapper on his day yet will surely need this to blow away several layers of cobwebs. **Selection:** RIDING CROP

1.55 BAGSHOT HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS B) £12,000 added 3m 110yds Penalty Value £8,013 BBC1

1 10/RR1-3 COMMERCIAL ARTIST (8) (D) (Mrs David Thompson) N Gaselee 10 12 0 ... W Marston
2 P12P16- SENOR EL BETRUTTI (189) (C) (Gerard Nock) Mrs Susan Nock 7 11 7 ... G Bradley
3 04421-2 STRAIGHT TALK (27) (CD) (BF) (Mrs C I A Paterson) P Nicholls 9 11 2 ... A P McCoy
4 U41133- ARTHUR'S MINSTREL (196) (D) (Bernard Hathaway) D Nicholson 9 10 11 ... R Johnson
5 BF461-4 GO BALLISTIC (7) (CD) (Mrs B J Lockhart) J O'Shea 7 10 3 ... M A Fitzgerald

– 5 declared –

BETTING: 2-1 Straight Talk, 11-4 Arthur's Minstrel, 7-2 Commercial Artist, 5-1 Senor El Betrutti, 11-2 Go Ballistic.

1995: Straight Talk 8 10 0 A P McCoy 15-8 (P Nicholls) 4 ran

FORM GUIDE

The transition from hurdling to chasing hasn't been a smooth one for Go Ballistic, but it looked as if the penny had finally dropped when he ran out a very easy winner of a valuable novice chase here in April. Go Ballistic races off the same mark and could be a snip if he puts in a clear round – he is also 18lb for the nine lengths he finished behind Senor El Betrutti over half a mile less here in December. A recent pipe-opener will have been a big help, but the front-running **STRAIGHT TALK** may well force him into errors at the pace he goes and a second successive win in this race is more than a possibility for Paul Nicholls's nine-year-old. This is a more competitive race than when Straight Talk beat Willsford 12 months. He's also gone up 11lb, but that isn't too bad in view of the progress he has made. A Sandown and Warwick winner since then and also a close fourth at Aintree, he ran a cracker on his opening outing this season when just failing to see off Big Ben Dun at a difference of 26lb at Kempton last month and is going to be difficult to peg back. Senor El Betrutti improved quite a bit after that first win here, beating a decent field at Sandown in February in addition to upsetting Call It A Day over the course (2m4f) in April. This is only his second season over fences, so it's likely there's a fair bit of improvement to come, and he can be expected to put up a good show. On this fast ground Arthur's Minstrel is unlikely to reproduce his good third behind stablemate Moorcroft Boy when the mud was flying in the Scottish National. **Selection:** STRAIGHT TALK

2.30 UNITED HOUSE CONSTRUCTION HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS B) £25,000 added 2m Penalty Value £16,694 BBC1

1 52F331- UNCLE ERNIE (206) (CD) (Lady Lloyd Webber) J FitzGerald 11 12 0 ... A P McCoy
2 231662- BIG MATT (203) (CD) (T Benfield and Mr W Brown) N Henderson 8 11 11 ... M A Fitzgerald
3 2F3554- STORM ALERT (186) (CD) (Mrs Dawn Perrett) D Nicholson 10 11 9 ... R Johnson
4 3/434-43 THUMBS UP (2) (D) (Mrs B Taylor) G McCourt 10 10 11 ... B Clifford

– 4 declared –

BETTING: 6-4 Storm Alert, 2-1 Big Matt, 11-4 Uncle Ernie, 10-1 Thumbs Up.

1995: Egypt Mill Prince 9 11 8 W Marston 3-1 (Mrs J Pitman) 8 ran

FORM GUIDE

Big Matt's main target is the Murphy's in a fortnight's time and he may just need this to put him right. He made his seasonal reappearance in this race last year and he and **STORM ALERT** finished strongly in second and third respectively behind Egypt Mill Prince. Storm Alert followed with good seconds to Sound Man and Easthorpe (rec 24lb) at Sandown before going off the boil. He was starting to struggle when falling four out behind Big Matt here in January and clearly isn't the force he was when winning this race in 1993 and 1994, yet if he returns in similar form to last year there must be every chance of him turning the tables on Big Matt on no less than 23lb better terms. He is also 19lb better in compared to their running here in January. **Uncle Ernie** also ran in that race and looked a real danger turning for home only to weaken coming to the last. His pull with the winner is 9lb and that looks significant considering his form after that. Placed at Cheltenham and Aintree, he wound up by winning at Fairyhouse and would have been the selection had there been any rain. **Selection:** STORM ALERT

3.05 VALLEY GARDENS NOVICE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2m 4f Penalty Value £3,566

1 3321-22 TAP ON TOOTSIE (28) (D) (R Cooper) T Wall 4 11 10 ... A P McCoy
2 0-04563 POSITIVO (58) (L Gilbert) Miss C Caroe 5 10 13 ... D Leahy
3 233F6F- LYPHARD'S FABLE (USA) (185) (Mrs G C McFerran) T George 5 10 7 ... R Johnson
4 FP0P-21 EMBLEY BUOY (28) (D) (Mrs Heather Barel) J Mullins 8 10 6 ... S Curran
5 2/000/-1 ASLAR (10) (Mrs P M Ratcliffe) J Moore 7 10 2 ... W McFarland
6 0P/0P32- CLOD HOPPER (338) (T J Parrott) W Muir 5 10 0 ... M Richards

– 6 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Clod Hopper 9st 13lb.

BETTING: 9-4 Tap On Tootsie, 3-1 Embley Buoy, 7-2 Aslar, 6-1 Lyphard's Fable, 7-1 Positivo, 8-1 Clod Hopper.

1995: Drummond Warrior 6 11 0 M A Fitzgerald 11-2 (T Thomson Jones) 10 ran

3.40 STANLAKE NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £6,000 added 2m 3f 110yds Penalty Value £4,986

1 624-121 STRONG PROMISE (4) (G A Hubbard) G Hubbard 5 11 8 ... K Gaule (3)
2 0/-3F MINOR KEY (14) (BF) (R M Ellis) J Jenkins 6 11 1 ... G Bradley

– 2 declared –

BETTING: 1-8 Strong Promise, 7-1 Minor Key.

1995: Jackson Flint 7 11 2 M A Fitzgerald 100-30 (T Thomson Jones) 3 ran

4.10 COPPER HORSE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS B) £7,000 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £4,993

1 FP40U-4 BARNA BOY (14) (C) (Lynn Wilson) N Henderson 8 11 10 ... M A Fitzgerald
2 P/1D020- SILVER GROOM (217) (D) (The Silver Darling Partnership) R Akehurst 6 11 9 ... S Ryan (5)
3 4/01120- CHARMING GIRL (USA) (182) (D) (C Cover) O Sherwood 5 11 4 ... J Osborne
4 0F60-64 SHOOFK (22) (Sean Dewine) S Dow 5 10 6 ... A P McCoy
5 1/3151-5 STONEY VALLEY (14) (D) (Ellis & Partners (Stockbrokers)) J Jenkins 6 10 1 ... N T Egan (7)

– 5 declared –

BETTING: 9-4 Silver Groom, 5-2 Charming Girl, 5-1 Barna Boy, 6-1 Shoofk, 7-1 Stoney Valley

1995: Admiral's Well 5 10 12 S Ryan 6-4 (R Akehurst) 6 ran

NEWMARKET

HYPERION

1.00 Silver Kristal	3.10 My Valentina
1.30 Summerville Wood	3.45 Ashby Hill
2.05 Unshaken (nb)	4.15 Knobbleeneeze
2.40 Centre Stalls	

GOING: Good. **STALLS:** centre. **DRAW ADVANTAGE:** None.

■ Right-hand course with 1m 2f straight.

■ **ADMISSION:** Club £14 (16 to 25-year-olds £8); Grandstand & Paddock £10 (16 to 25-year-olds £5); Family Enclosure £3. **CAR PARK:** Members £1; remainder free.

SIS

■ **LEADING TRAINERS WITH RUNNERS: H Cecil** — 70 winners from 295 runners gives a success ratio of 23.7% and a loss to a £1 level stake of £8.77; **J Gosden** — 56 winners, 385 runners, 14.5%, -£83.76; **R Hannon** — 51 winners, 606 runners, 8.45%, -£266.75; **B Hills** — 38 winners, 314 runners, 12.1%, -£123.26.

■ **LEADING JOCKEYS: Pat Eddery** — 123 winners, 563 rides, 21.8%, -£24.81; **L Dettori** — 82 winners, 563 rides, 14.6%, -£152.73; **W R Swinburn** — 55 winners, 388 rides, 14.3%, -£22.87; **W Carson** — 55 winners, 496 rides, 11.1%, -£77.99.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Ike's Pet (1.30); **Welton Arsenal** (visored) (3.45); **Alpine Hideaway** (4.15).

WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: None.

LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Nalesant (2.05) has been sent 347 miles by R McKellar from Lesmahagow, Strathclyde; **Dreams End** (3.45) sent 274 miles by P Bowen from Haverfordwest, Dyfed; **Quilling** (4.15) sent 314 miles by M Dods from Piercebridge, Co. Durham.

1.00 EBF BALATON LODGE MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2YO fillies 7f Penalty Value £4,143

1 APPLE BRANDY (USA) (Highclere Thoroughbred Racing Ltd) G Lewis 8 11 ... G Hind 14
2 BEGUINE (USA) (Lord Howard de Walden) W Jarvis 8 11 ... J Weaver 3
3 0 BLUEYGREEN (28) (Bloomsbury Stud) P Chapple-Hyam 8 11 ... N Day 6
4 CORETTA (Gerald Leigh) L Cumani 8 11 ... O Urbina 23
5 0 DAMANKA (8) (R H Burrough) M Bell 8 11 ... M Fenton 15
6 0 DOUBLE EIGHT (72) (R W Miller) B Hills 8 11 ... G Duffield 7
7 DOYELLA (Saeed Manana) D Loder 8 11 ... P McCabe (5) 2
8 5 FREE AS A BIRD (11) (C Marner) M Channon 8 11 ... J F Egan 19
9 GINGERSNAP (T D Holland-Martin) H Cecil 8 11 ... Pat Eddery 21
10 GLACIER (The Queen) Lord Huntingdon 8 11 ... D Harrison 11
11 0 JUCINDA (19) (Mrs Samantha Watson) J Pearce 8 11 ... G Bardwell 22
12 LA CURAMALAL (Count Federico Zichy-Thyssen) G Wragg 8 11 ... A Clark 5
13 MAROUILLA (Pinos Christodoulou) M Stoute 8 11 ... K Darley 13
14 MAROZIA (USA) (Sheikh Mohammed) J Gosden 8 11 ... L Dettori 4
15 NIGHT SCEPTRE (Sceptre Racing (1)) R Armstrong 8 11 ... G Carter 17
16 NUBILE (J Hanson) B Hills 8 11 ... J D Smith (3) 8
17 PALISADE (USA) (K Abdullah) H Cecil 8 11 ... W Ryan 20
18 POINTELLE (Anthony Hide) A Hide 8 11 ... A McGlone 18
19 REBECCA SHARP (A E Oppenheimer) G Wragg 8 11 ... M Hills 24
20 RUSSIAN OLIVE (Lord Carnarvon) L Cumani 8 11 ... J Fortune 10
21 5 SEATTLE SWING (39) (Cheveley Park Stud) J Gosden 8 11 ... J Carroll 12
22 SHARKIYAH (Hamdan Al Maktoum) R Armstrong 8 11 ... R Hills 9
23 3 SILVER KRISTAL (56) (Sir Eric Parker) R Akehurst 8 11 ... T Quinn 16
24 ST BLAINE (CAN) (Mrs Virginia Kraft Payson) D Loder 8 11 ... D R McCabe 1

– 24 declared –

BETTING: 5-2 Gingersnap, 6-1 Marozia, 7-1 St Blaine, 8-1 Silver Kristal, Palisade, 10-1 Marouilla, Doyella, 12-1 others

1995: Awaamir 2 8 11 R Hills 2-1 (J Gosden) 19 ran

1.30 NGK SPARK PLUGS SELLING STAKES (CLASS E) £5,000 added 2YO 1m Penalty Value £4,078

1 300106 IMPERIAL OR METRIC (12) (D) (Clayton Bigley Partnership) J Berry 9 0 ... K Darley 2
2 530304 SUMMERVILLE WOOD (16) (Likely Lads Partnership) P Mooney 9 0 ... P McCabe (5) 20 B
3 303065 AFICIONADO (16) (Anthony Pye-Jeary) R Johnson Houghton 8 11 ... G Duffield 19
4 0 DON'T FOOL ME (24) (P M Mooney) P Mooney 8 12 ... S D Williams 21
5 0 DOUBLE-O (15) (R K Bids Ltd) W Jarvis 8 11 ... S Sanders 14
6 66330 HALLMARK (12) (D B Gallop) R Hannon 8 11 ... Dane O'Neill 18
7 0500 HEGGIES (12) (Charles Egerton) C Egerton 8 11 ... L Dettori 7
8 000 MELLWOOD (54) (Mark Tompkins Racing) M Tompkins 8 11 ... M Henry (3) 1
9 000 MOTCOMBS CLUB (57) (Motcombs Racing Syndicate) N Callaghan 8 11 ... Pat Eddery 6
10 00 PRINCE JORDAN (16) (E Carter) I Campbell 8 11 ... M Wigham 15
11 00 SAM'S YER MAN (15) (Miss L J Ward) S Williams 8 11 ... G Hind 12
12 ZAFARELLI (Miss L J Ward) S Williams 8 11 ... G Carter 16
13 300220 PRINCESS OF HEARTS (5) (A S Reid) B Meehan 8 9 ... T Quinn 10 B
14 BEVELED MILL (Mrs E A Dawson) P Evans 8 6 ... J F Egan 3
15 060 FLOOD'S HOT STUFF (14) (Richard Flood Bloodstock Ltd) M Channon 8 6 ... R Perham 17
16 IKE'S PET (M A Jarvis) M Jarvis 8 6 ... P Bloomfield 6 B
17 0 MECHILIE (12) (Sir Simon Lycett Green) J Payne 8 6 ... M Tebbutt 13
18 NORTHERN TOUCH (James Brown) S Williams 8 6 ... D R McCabe 8
19 0 RINCA (16) (P Cunningham) J Pearce 8 6 ... G Bardwell 22
20 0503 ROYAL ROULETTE (14) (W J P Jackson) S Woods 8 6 ... D Biggs 11
21 SANDELLA TWINKLE (D & L Racing) D Morris 8 6 ... N Day 4
22 0 SHEEBA (14) (Racing Thoroughbreds Plc) Miss A Embiricos 8 6 ... A McCarthy (7) 9

– 22 declared –

BETTING: 9-2 Motcombs Club, 5-1 Imperial Or Metric, 11-2 Princess Of Hearts, 6-1 Summerville Wood, 7-1 Aficionado, 8-1 Hallmark, 14-1 Heggies, 20-1 others

1995: Polar Spirit 2 8 6 R Hills 100-30 (W Haggas) 14 ran

2.05 EQUITY FINANCIAL COLLECTIONS STAKES (CLASS C) £7,650 added 6f Penalty Value £4,802

1 354002 HOW LONG (41) (Dr M Botti) L Cumani 3 9 8 ... O Urbina 8
2 2140 SAHEEEL (USA) (14) (Godolphin) Saeed bin Suroor 3 9 8 ... L Dettori 2
3 03-3000 AGNELLA (11) (D) (Bryan Pennick) G L Moore 3 9 3 ... G Duffield 6
4 100050 NAISSANT (21) (D) (William Gorham) R McKellar 3 9 3 ... J Carroll 1
5 1 VOLLEY (25) (D) (Three Shires Racing) J Berry 3 9 3 ... G Carter 5
6 50 WINDRUSH HOLLY (9) (Regal (Witney) Ltd) J Bosley 3 9 0 ... C Rutter 4
7 21035 VASARI (16) (Alec Tuckerman) M Channon 2 8 8 ... T Quinn 7
8 01 UNSHAKEN (12) (W J Gredley) J Fanshawe 2 8 5 ... D Harrison 3

– 8 declared –

BETTING: 5-2 How Long, 3-1 Saheeel, 7-2 Vasari, 9-2 Volley, 8-1 Unshaken, 12-1 Agnella, 20-1 others

1995: Eshabiba 2 8 5 T Quinn 4-6 (J Dunlop) 5 ran

2.40 BEN MARSHALL STAKES (CLASS A) (Listed) £17,000 added 1m Penalty Value £11,169 C4

1 214132 COOL EDGE (27) (D) (Henry B H Chen) M Tompkins 5 9 1 ... N Day 8
2 150221 ALI-ROYAL (33) (C) (D) (Greenbay Stables Ltd) H Cecil 3 8 13 ... Pat Eddery 7
3 0-20110 CENTRE STALLS (27) (D) (Anthony Pye-Jeary) R Johnson Houghton 3 8 13 ... S Sanders 2
4 430263 CELESTIAL KEY (USA) (7) (CD) (M J Brodrick) M Johnston 6 8 12 ... J Weaver 5
5 22-0022 NIJO (15) (CD) (Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum) D Loder 5 8 12 ... D R McCabe 1
6 10 LIONIZE (USA) (15) (C) (M Tabor) P Chapple-Hyam 3 8 10 ... D Harrison 6
7 012111 FATEFULLY (USA) (22) (D) (Godolphin) Saeed bin Suroor 3 8 8 ... L Dettori 3
8 300143 MY BRANCH (18) (Wafic Said) B Hills 3 8 8 ... M Hills 4

– 8 declared –

BETTING: 11-4 Fatefully, 3-1 Ali-Royal, 7-2 My Branch, 6-1 Centre Stalls, 7-1 Celestial Key, 10-1 Cool Edge, 12-1 others

1995: Celestial Key 5 8 12 P Robinson 25-1 (M Johnston) 7 ran

FORM GUIDE

FATEFULLY, after striking form at Yarmouth in June, was unlucky in the running when a head second to Blessed Spirit at Doncaster and has made amends, landing all three races since, at Sandown and Ascot (two). Both the Berkshire track victories were in Listed company. She can carry on the good work though it will be tough with **Ali-Royal** and **My Branch** taking her on. Ali-Royal, after good seconds to Ruznama at York (Listed) and to Kammtarra at Doncaster, slammed Nijo a dozen lengths at Bath and meets this rival 3lb better. My Branch, who made the frame in the 1000 Guineas and the Irish equivalent, scored in style at Doncaster in September and, though a disappointing favourite behind Tagula on a return to Doncaster, finished a four-length fourth behind Charnwood Forest in the Challenge Stakes over seven here last time. **Centre Stalls**, unplaced against Alhaarth at Longchamp (Group Two) after wins at Sandown and Kempton, could also pose a threat. **Selection:** FATEFULLY

3.10 ZETLAND STAKES (CLASS A) (Listed) £14,000 added 2YO 1m 2f Penalty Value £9,523 C4

1 0011 BOLD WORDS (CAN) (15) (C) (Maktoum Al Maktoum) E Dunlop 9 0 ... W Ryan 6
2 12 CINEMA PARADISO (46) (Christopher Wright) P Cole 8 11 ... T Quinn 5
3 1 ELDORADO (33) (D) (R W Huggins) M Johnston 8 11 ... J Weaver 8
4 331303 MISTER PINK (19) (C) (C W Sumner) R Johnson Houghton 8 11 ... K Darley 4 B
5 414 SHADOW LEAD (74) (H C Chung) L Cumani 8 11 ... L Dettori 7
6 041 SILVER PATRIARCH (26) (D) (Peter S Winfield) J Dunlop 8 11 ... Pat Eddery 9
7 012 ATLANTIC DESIRE (15) (BF) (Atlantic Racing Limited) M Johnston 8 6 ... R Hills 3
8 015 ATTITRE (FR) (28) (R A Pledger) C Brittain 8 6 ... S Sanders 1
9 21 MY VALENTINA (11) (D J Deer) B Hills 8 6 ... M Hills 10
10 05431 SWALLOW BREEZE (39) (D) (Forenaghts Racing) Dr J Scargill 8 6 ... G Bardwell 2

– 10 declared –

BETTING: 4-1 Eldorado, 9-2 Shadow Lead, 5-1 Bold Words, Silver Patriarch, 7-1 Attitre, 8-1 My Valentina, 10-1 others

1995: Gentilhomme 2 8 11 T Quinn 5-2 (P Cole) 6 ran

FORM GUIDE

Mark Johnson, successful in this with with Double Trigger (1993) and Double Eclipse (1994), can again do the trick, this time via **ELDORADO**, who, like that pair, is by Ela-Mana-Mou. My selection, who sports the Double Trigger silks of Ron Huggins, comes here as the winner of his single start to date over this distance at Bath on 30 September, staying on strongly after getting behind early. There is clearly better still to come from Eldorado and he is a strong fancy to follow up. **Silver Patriarch** showed his appreciation for this testing trip when striking form at Pontefract and might be the one to cause most trouble. **Bold Words** is on a hat-trick after victories in a Salisbury maiden and a nursery here, both over a mile. He should have no trouble in getting the extra two furlongs but has to concede weight all round. **Shadow Lead** landed an auction maiden at Chepstow in July and was not discredited in running fourth to Revoque in the Acomb over seven at York. He represents Luca Cumani, who won this with Bonny Scot (1991). With Barry Hills' youngsters in fine form, a good run can be expected from **My Valentina**. **Atlantic Desire**, a stablemate of Eldorado, had Mister Pink a length and a quarter adrift when going under a head to Windsor Castle over this journey at Leicester. **Selection:** ELDORADO

3.45 LADBROKE AUTUMN HANDICAP (CLASS C) £40,000 added 1m Penalty Value £22,900 C4

1 232301 PRINCE BABAR (22) (D) (Giles W Pritchard-Gordon) J Banks 5 10 0 ... R Mullen (7) 11
2 241020 KAYVEE (28) (D) (J H Richmond-Watson) G Harwood 7 9 13 ... A Clark 14
3 216-060 COMMISTAL (7) (D) (Sheikh Mohammed) J Gosden 3 9 10 ... L Dettori 6
4 456024 WELTON ARSENAL (5) (Business Forms Express) M Channon 4 9 6 ... Candy Morris 26 V
5 226251 HAWKSLEY HILL (14) (CD) (Hamish Alexander) Mrs J Ramsden 3 9 4 ... J Fortune 15
6 001100 SKY DOME (26) (CD) (Miss D J Merson) M Tompkins 3 9 2 ... T Quinn 2
7 43-5040 DELTA SOLEIL (USA) (14) (D) (American Connection) P Harris 4 9 2 ... G Hind 25
8 311-30 CARBURTON (188) (B H Farr) J Glover 3 9 0 ... S Sanders 4
9 120600 SAIFAN (4) (CD) (Mrs L Brook) D Morris 7 8 13 ... N Day 7 B
10 052112 HIGH PREMIUM (14) (D) (J C Parsons) R Fahey 8 8 12 ... A Culhane 12
11 10-5000 TREMPLIN (USA) (21) (M Tabor) N Callaghan 4 8 12 ... S Whitworth 5
12 025006 SANDMOOR CHAMBRAY (14) (Sandmoor Textiles Co Ltd) T Easterby 5 8 10 ... M Birch 17 B
13 1/145/0 RED RAINBOW (8) (D) (J R Ali) B Hanbury 8 8 10 ... W Ryan 16
14 100400 CATCH THE LIGHTS (14) (D) (T A Johnsey) R Hannon 3 8 9 ... Dane O'Neill 21
15 000214 DREAMS END (7) (C) (T G Price) P Bowen 8 8 5 ... G Duffield 19
16 000110 MASTER BEVELED (21) (CD) (Mrs E J Williams) P Evans 6 8 3 ... J F Egan 3
17 000153 ARTFUL DANE (14) (D) (S P Lansdown Racing) M Heaton-Ellis 4 8 3 ... S Drowne 8 V
18 640020 FLYING NORTH (14) (Dr Glyn Meredith) Mrs M Reveley 3 8 2 ... D R McCabe 13
19 40226 SCARPETTA (USA) (9) (James Barber (Susan Abbott Racing)) J Hills 3 8 1 ... M Henry (3) 22
20 161120 GLADYS ALTHORPE (14) (D) (T S Ely) J Eyre 3 8 0 ... T Williams 23
21 441302 DUELLO (4) (D) (H C Promotions Ltd) M Blanshard 5 7 13 ... J Quinn 1
22 331611 ASHBY HILL (31) (D) (Miss Meriel Tufnell) R Rowe 5 7 13 ... G Carter 18
23 3-52010 ROYAL JADE (21) (BF) (D J Deer) B Hills 3 7 11 ... R French (7) 9
24 532000 WINSTON (14) (D) (John Galvanoni) J Bethell 3 7 11 ... Martin Dwyer (5) 24
25 4-05402 ALSAHIB (USA) (21) (Mrs S Livesey) W Muir 3 7 10 ... Declan O'Shea 20
26 000001 SALTANDO (18) (CD) (Mrs Sandy Herridge) Pat Mitchell 5 7 10 ... L Charnock 10

– 26 declared –

Minimum weight: 7st 10lb. True handicap weight: Saltando 7st 2lb.

BETTING: 5-1 Hawksley Hill, 8-1 High Premium, 10-1 Ashby Hill, Royal Jade, 12-1 Winston, Prince Babar, Dreams End, Sandmoor Chambray, 14-1 others

1995: Tarawa 3 9 2 R Hughes 9-1 (N Callaghan) 30 ran

FORM GUIDE

This is virtually a re-run of a race over course and distance a fortnight ago when **Hawksley Hill**, fifth from a bad draw in the Cambridgeshire, got home by a length and a half and a length from **High Premium** and **Artful Dane**, with **Sandmoor Chambray** sixth and **WINSTON** a five-and-a-half-length eighth of 27. Winston did not get the best of runs that day and, with advantages of between 1lb and 8lb, can turn around latest running while he can confirm the form with **Saifan**, **Gladys Althorpe**, **Catch The Lights** and **Flying North**, who all finished in arrears. Winston was a winner at Nottingham and Newcastle early in the season and also ran well when third behind Hamlet at the latter track and when beaten by Fahim in a field of 20 on the July Course here. **Delta Soleil** looked set for an early success after his good run in the Lincoln. Behind **Prince Babar** (third) and **Kayvee** (seventh) in the Victoria Cup, he followed with a fourth to Hi Nod at Doncaster (7f) after looking the winner a furlong out. He was reappearing after a five-month break when seventh of 22 behind Mezzanotte over seven furlongs of this course. He could be in the shake-up even if the extra furlong is not in his favour. **Ashby Hill** retains her form well and was recording her fifth success of the season when a couple of lengths too good for Fionn De Cool in an 18-runner race at Salisbury last time. **Selection:** WINSTON

4.15 BURROUGH GREEN HANDICAP (CLASS D) £5,100 added 7f Penalty Value £4,789 C4

1 066001 CHARLIE SILLETT (11) (D) (John Sillett) B Hills 4 10 3 ... M Hills 24
2 502000 SUALTACH (27) (D) (Noel Sweeney) R Hollinshead 3 9 13 ... L Dettori 4
3 031401 PERSIAN FAYRE (21) (D) (Murray Grubb) J Berry 4 9 13 ... K Darley 5
4 310026 BROUGHTONS TURMOIL (14) (CD) (Broughton/Westwood) W Musson 7 9 11 ... D R McCabe 8
5 220000 TILER (27) (D) (Mrs C Robinson) M Johnston 4 9 11 ... J Weaver 13
6 0-00000 NO EXTRAS (48) (K Higson) G L Moore 6 9 11 ... J Dennis (7) 25
7 400006 MOUNTGATE (25) (CD) (J F Coupland) M Bradley 4 9 9 ... Dean McKeown 22
8 313003 STOPPES BROW (11) (D) (C J Pennick) G L Moore 4 9 9 ... S Whitworth 15 V
9 032561 ALPINE HIDEAWAY (19) (D) (Ms Mary Breslin) B Hanbury 3 9 9 ... J Stack 18 B
10 102231 AMBER FORT (9) (D) (Caledonian Racing Society) D Elsworth 3 9 8 ... D Griffiths (5) 27 V
11 3-24010 RUWY (37) (Hamdan Al Maktoum) C J Benstead 3 9 8 ... R Hills 11
12 000400 BARREL OF HOPE (9) (D) (Peter J Watson) J L Eyre 4 9 7 ... R Lappin 20 B
13 2-00000 AL REET (147) (The Gemini Partnership (I)) M Hammond 5 9 7 ... J Fortune 26
14 812532 OBERON'S DART (35) (D) (Peter Wragg) P Makin 3 9 6 ... A Clark 19
15 1010U3 QUILLING (4) (D) (A G Watson) M Dods 4 9 6 ... F Lynch (3) 29
16 2000 DOUBLE MARCH (9) (Mrs P Scott-Dunn) P Webber 3 9 5 ... R Perham 8
17 040000 KNOBBLEENEEZE (9) (D) (Anthony Andrews) M Channon 6 9 4 ... T Quinn 1
18 00001-6 JIBEREEN (212) (D) (Peter Skelton) P Howling 4 9 4 ... J F Egan 21
19 21-0450 MARISTAX (12) (D) (T G Warner) P Makin 3 9 3 ... S Sanders 14
20 013-000 BEN GUNN (9) (CD) (Michael White) P Walwyn 4 9 1 ... J Carroll 10
21 513204 IMPULSIVE AIR (14) (D) (T A Scothern) E Weymes 4 8 13 ... J Quinn 6
22 300155 CLASSIC BEAUTY (11) (Classic Bloodstock Plc) R Harris 3 8 12 ... D Bardwell? 2
23 163500 WINSOME WOOSTER (9) (D) (Miss Amanda J Rawding) P Murphy 5 9 8 ... S Drowne 28
24 600040 EUPHYLLIA (8) (D) (J G Vaughan) Bob Jones 4 7 11 ... F Norton 9
25 01F005 BROUGHTON'S PRIDE (21) (Mrs Janet Morris) J L Eyre 5 7 10 ... T Williams 1
26 500403 INDIAHRA (10) (P J Loxton) J L Eyre 5 7 10 ... R French (7) 17 V
27 001000 BOWCLIFFE (58) (Philip Davies) Mrs A Naughton 5 7 10 ... N Adams 18
28 43-6000 CHILI HEIGHTS (9) (CD) (B T Attenborough) G Balding 6 7 10 ... N Varley (3) 7 V
29 415054 BALLARD LADY (5) (D) (Mrs P Wake) J Wainwright 4 7 10 ... L Charnock 23

– 29 declared –

Minimum weight: 7st 10lb. True handicap weights: Broughton's Pride 7st 5lb, Indiahra 7st 5lb, Bowcliffe 7st 7lb, Chili Heights 7st 6lb, Ballard Lady 7st 5lb.

BETTING: 7-1 Amber Fort, 8-1 Quilling, 10-1 Persian Fayre, Charlie Sillett, 12-1 Alpine Hideaway, Broughtons Turmoil, Impulsive Air, Oberon's Dart, 14-1 others

1995: Mountgate 3 9 7 J F Egan 14-1 (M P Bielby) 18 ran

FORM GUIDE

Winner of two of his last three races in 1995, **CHARLIE SILLETT** is clearly an autumn horse and gained a belated first success of the current campaign when defeating Cancature a head in a field of 20 over six furlongs at Chepstow 11 days ago. Barry Hills' runner is on 10st 3lb but looks the type who can carry big weights and goes off only a 3lb higher mark than last time. Charlie Sillett has won over this extra furlong and can confirm latest form with the third, **Stoppes Brow**, who was beaten more than a length and has a 4lb advantage. **Amber Fort** could trouble the best of these, having gained a decisive win in a 28-runner race at Newbury nine days ago. He is raised 6lb but should again take care of **Winsome Win** (seventh) and **Chili Heights**, **Knobbleeneeze**, **Barrel Of Hope** and **Double March**, who were way down the field. Amber Fort had Charlie Sillett behind when third of 22 to Mezzanotte here a fortnight ago but Charlie Sillett appears to have improved enough since to reverse that form. **Alpine Hideaway**, who easily justified favouritism in an apprentices' maiden at Leicester last time, must also go on the shortlist. **Selection:** CHARLIE SILLETT

WETHERBY

HYPERION

12.50 L'Equipe	2.50 What A Question
1.20 Random Harvest	3.25 One Man
1.50 Direct Route	4.00 Bellator
2.20 HILL OF TULLOW (nap)	

GOING: Good

■ Left-hand oval circuit. Run-in of 200yds slightly uphill.

■ Course is NE of town on B1224 near junction of A58 and A1. **ADMISSION:** [illegible] £12 (accompanied under-16s free); Tattersalls £7, Course £4 [illegible] **CAR PARK:** Free

SIS

■ **LEADING TRAINERS WITH RUNNERS: Mrs M Reveley** — 16 winners from [illegible] runners gives a success ratio of 20.1% and a loss to a £1 level stake of £7.[illegible]; **G Richards** — 26 winners, 110 runners, 23.6%, -£7.47; **D Nicholson** — 16 winners, 48 runners, 33.3%, +£17.10; **J FitzGerald** — 11 winners, 91 runners, 12.1%, +£0.78.

■ **LEADING JOCKEYS: P Niven** — 14 winners, [illegible] rides, [illegible]; **L Wyer** — 37 winners, 151 rides, 24.5%, +£0.71; **A Maguire** — 19 winners, 77 rides, [illegible], +£44.78; **A Dobbin** — 15 winners, 80 rides, 18.8%, -£0.70.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: None.

WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: None.

LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Stately Home (2.20) has been sent 210 miles by P Bowen from Haverfordwest, Dyfed; **Bellator** (4.00) sent [illegible] miles by G Balding from Fyfield, Hants; **Hever Golf Diamond** (4.00) sent 220 miles by T J Naughton from Epsom, Surrey.

12.50 BOLTON PERCY NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,500 added 2m Penalty Value £4,159

1 5000-12 MITHRAIC (6) (D) (C P M Racing) W Cunningham 4 11 4 ... L McGrath (7)
2 P5C13-2 SAMAND (84) (D) (BF) (Maghum Construction Ltd) Mrs L Siddall 4 11 4 ... C Maude
3 2120- BEN CRUACHAN (166) (Caledonian Racing Club) J M Jefferson 6 11 0 ... C O'Dwyer
4 4/55/ BLANC SEING (FR) (21) (J E Swiers) J Swiers 9 11 0 ... Mr S Swiers 5
5 1- B THE ONE (201) (Andrew Page and Mr John Pollard) J Quinn 5 11 0 ... Derek Byrne
6 300- CLEVER BOY (302) (Mrs M E Curtis) J Curtis 5 11 0 ... F Leahy (3)
7 0064- DONT FORGET CURTIS (239) (Leonard Curtis Partnership) G M Moore 4 11 0 ... N Bentley
8 36-F DURANO (7) (C H Stevens) T Easterby 5 11 0 ... L Wyer
9 ENDOWMENT (R Haig) Mrs M Reveley 4 11 0 ... G Cahill (3)
10 00-0 FORBES (14) [illegible] 5 11 0 ... A S Smith
11 HOPEFUL LORD (P Piller) P Cheesbrough 4 11 0 ... Mr S P Hennessey (7)
12 5556-0 LAST TRY (6) [illegible] B Rothwell 5 11 0 ... B Powell
13 3 L'EQUIPE (546) (Michael H Watt) C Mann 6 11 0 ... R Dunwoody
14 6632- PENROSE LAD (NZ) (397) (Mrs C N Weatherby) D Nicholson 6 11 0 ... A Maguire
15 1412- QUEEN OF SPADES (384) (Mrs R Vaughan) N Twiston-Davies 6 10 9 ... C Llewellyn

– 15 declared –

BETTING: 9-4 Queen Of Spades, 11-4 Penrose Lad, 6-1 Durano, 8-1 L'Equipe, 10-1 Mithraic, Samand, 12-1 Endowment, B The One, 16-1 others

1995: Durham Drapes 4 10 8 L Wyer 6-4 (M H Easterby) 4 ran

1.20 ARTHUR STEPHENSON NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £6,500 added 2m 4f 110yds Penalty Value £4,590

1 426121- POTTER'S BAY (176) (Mrs J E Potter) D Nicholson 7 11 10 ... A Maguire
2 122624- RYE CROSSING (215) (C H Stevens) T Easterby 6 11 1 ... L Wyer
3 6426- RANDOM HARVEST (273) (C C Buckley) Mrs M Reveley 7 10 11 ... R Dunwoody
4 20234-5 COOL WEATHER (17) (P McDonagh) P Cheesbrough 8 10 5 ... A S Smith
5 F2/2F52- GRUNDON (166) (Mrs L C Taylor) Mrs L Taylor 7 10 2 ... G Upton 5
6 24562-4 FINAL BEAT (30) (Mrs M E Curtis) J Curtis 7 10 1 ... C O'Dwyer
7 45400-3 CAMP BANK (30) (Mrs J Mould) N Twiston-Davies 6 10 0 ... C Llewellyn
8 335034 TICO GOLD (229) (Miss S J Turton) P Cheesbrough 8 10 0 ... G Cahill (3)
9 40550-0 THEYDON PRIDE (14) (K F Clutterbuck) K Clutterbuck 7 10 0 ... T J Murphy

– 9 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Tico Gold 9st 10lb, Theydon Pride [illegible]

BETTING: 6-4 Potter's Bay, 3-1 Rye Crossing, 5-1 Random Harvest, 7-1 Camp Bank, 10-1 Tico Gold, 12-1 Final Beat, 14-1 others

1995: Gnome's Tycoon 9 11 4 A Maguire 11-2 (J H Johnson) 5 ran

1.50 STANLEY RACING HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,250 added 2m Penalty Value £3,711

1 341FP-5 CUMBRIAN CHALLENGE (14) (CD) (Cumbrian Industrials Ltd) T Easterby 7 12 0 ... L Wyer
2 053210- FOURTH IN LINE (182) (D) (John Nichols) M Wilkinson 8 11 9 ... R Dunwoody
3 11232-4 DIRECT ROUTE (17) (D) (Chris Heron) J H Johnson 5 11 2 ... A Maguire
4 120643- KAITAK (182) (CD) (C J Murphy) J Carr 5 11 1 ... F Leahy (3)
5 40153-1 DESERT FIGHTER (17) (CD) (A Frame) Mrs M Reveley 5 10 5 ... G Cahill (3)

– 5 declared –

BETTING: 2-1 Direct Route, 11-4 Cumbrian Challenge, 4-1 Desert Fighter, 9-2 Kaitak, 6-1 Fourth In Line

1995: Down The Fell 6 10 5 A Maguire 11-2 (J H Johnson) 5 ran

FORM GUIDE

Desert Fighter had a fitness advantage over **DIRECT ROUTE** when winning over course and distance last month, having been racing on the Flat. Mary Reveley's five-year-old has Direct Route about seven lengths back in fourth but there must be every chance that Howard Johnson's runner can reverse the placings on 6lb better terms. He began last season winning bumpers and novice hurdles at Musselburgh and Kelso before running well in handicap company. Direct Route had **Kaitak** well behind when runner-up to Suivez at Ascot in April and failed by just a head against Glenugie at Kelso on his final start in May. He is just 2lb higher now. Kaitak's Ascot run was not his true form and he bounced back on his final start when third to Tragic Hero in the Swinton Handicap Hurdle at Haydock (**Fourth In Line** 12th of 19). He should be reasonably straight having run twice on the Flat in the summer. **Cumbrian Challenge**, who proved a smart novice chaser last season, was well beaten over hurdles at Kempton on his return but will strip fitter now. **Selection:** DIRECT ROUTE

2.20 PETERHOUSE GROUP HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS B) £10,000 2m 4f 110yds Penalty Value £6,710 C4

1 11/1114- HILL OF TULLOW (218) (Lady Harris) D Nicholson 7 12 0 ... A Maguire
2 3411-12 BERTONE (14) (D) (Mrs Harry J Duffey) K Bailey 7 11 10 ... C O'Dwyer
3 345121- JOE WHITE (219) (D) (R G Ross) J H Johnson 10 10 6 ... A S Smith
4 14U224 STATELY HOME (6) (P Bowen) P Bowen 5 10 6 ... R Dunwoody

– 4 declared –

BETTING: 10-11 Hill Of Tullow, 5-2 Bertone, 9-2 Joe White, 8-1 Stately Home

1995: Sea Breaker 7 10 0 L Wyer 4-1 (D Carlillon) 5 ran

FORM GUIDE

HILL OF TULLOW made an impressive debut in this country a year ago when beating Berude Not To in a valuable novice event at Chepstow (2m3f) and, stepped up in distance, went on to win the Ewell Chase at Sandown in December and Ascot's Peter Ross Novice Chase the following month. A disappointment on his final start in the Mildmay Novice Chase at Aintree won by Addington Boy, Hill Of Tullow may have been unsuited by the fastish ground then and certainly some rain now would aid his chance, but he is still a good prospect and can outclass these rivals. **Bertone** looks to have sufficient weight now after his close second to General Crack in the Charisma Gold Cup at Kempton – he is 12lb higher than when beating Micherado four lengths on his return at Uttoxeter. **Stately Home** will find this much tougher than the races he has been winning during the summer. He is a pound lower than when short-headed by Eastern Magic at Stratford last month but winner and third were both racing from out of the handicap. **Joe White** won the John Hughes Memorial over the National fences at Aintree on his final start when a stone out of the handicap and it will be a surprise if he is good enough off a mark 5lb higher still. **Selection:** HILL OF TULLOW

2.50 TOTE WEST YORKSHIRE HURDLE (CLASS A) (Grade 2) £20,000 3m 1f Penalty Value £12,500 C4

1 P51201- TREASURE AGAIN (182) (John Hugo Gwynne) Mrs M Jones 7 11 4 ... Derek Byrne
2 5602-41 NON VINTAGE (30) (Alan Mann) M Chapman 5 11 0 ... W Worthington
3 0205-0 PAST MASTER (7) (Northern Bloodstock Racing) S Gollings 8 11 0 ... A Maguire
4 P/111- TRAINGLOT (234) (Marquesa de Moratalla) J FitzGerald 9 11 0 ... R Dunwoody
5 351112 DIFFICULT TIMES (20) (P M Dowling) G Lyons (Ir) 4 10 13 ... L Wyer
6 3F20-P4 OUR KRIS (14) (M E Sowersby) M Sowersby 4 10 13 ... A S Smith
7 2362-10 WHAT A QUESTION (20) (Mrs Miles Valentine) M Morris (Ir) 8 10 9 ... C O'Dwyer

– 7 declared –

BETTING: 5-4 What A Question, 5-2 Trainglot, 9-2 Difficult Times, 10-1 Our Kris, Treasure Again, 10-1 Non Vintage, 25-1 Past Master

1995: Cab On Target 9 11 7 P Niven 8-11 (Mrs M Reveley) 4 ran

FORM GUIDE

It can pay to overlook **WHAT A QUESTION'S** poor run at Naas last time when, for a mile for a handicap hurdle in which fellow Irish raider **Difficult Times** was beaten two and a half lengths by Jane Digby. Mouse Morris's mare had shown she retains all her ability a week earlier at Tipperary when winning a conditions hurdle. What A Question has done well on previous visits to this country and appreciates good ground. She won the three-mile handicap hurdle at Aintree in 1995 and again ran well when carrying 12-2 in this year's version to be sixth to Top Spin, three places and some 24 lengths in front of **Treasure Again**, who is 16lb worse off. What A Question carries no penalty today and will be difficult to beat in receipt of weight from all her rivals. Difficult Times has proved most consistent in Ireland this year but is another to meet What A Question on 16lb worse terms compared to their latest meeting. **Trainglot** is the obvious danger. His ninth in the Cesarewitch was no disgrace and he did really well to win three valuable hurdles last season, scoring by a head from Treasure Again in the Coral Cup at Cheltenham for the first of them. He meets Treasure Again 7lb better today. Last month's Market Rasen winner **Non Vintage** has plenty to find with the principals compared to handicaps. **Selection.** WHAT A QUESTION

3.25 CHARLIE HALL CHASE (CLASS A) (Grade 2) £30,000 3m 1f Penalty Value £18,300 C4

1 1P4420- BARTON BANK (189) (C) (Mrs J Mould) D Nicholson 10 11 10 ... A Maguire
2 UF1116- ONE MAN (233) (C) (D) (J Hales) G Richards 8 11 10 ... R Dunwoody
3 111P1P- SCOTTON BANKS (189) (C) (D) (J Bray) T Easterby 7 11 10 ... L Wyer
4 53P550- YOUNG HUSTLER (189) (C) (D) (Gwen MacEchern) N Twiston-Davies 9 11 2 ... C Maude

– 4 declared –

BETTING: 8-11 One Man, 3-1 Scotton Banks, 4-1 Barton Bank, 8-1 Young Hustler

1995: Barton Bank 9 11 2 A Maguire 8-15 (D Nicholson) 3 ran

FORM GUIDE

Barton Bank won this in 1993, fell (beaten at the time) when **Young Hustler** landed the prize the following year, but beat that rival seven lengths last season. Barton Bank was getting 8lb last year but this year must concede that much to Young Hustler and Nigel Twiston-Davies's runner can come out on top now. Both have plenty on with **ONE MAN** and **Scotton Banks** in the field, however. It will be interesting to see if Young Hustler takes on One Man for the lead. Gordon Richards's star had no difficulty seeing off both Young Hustler and Barton Bank in the King George at Sandown in January, and will not be beaten today if in the same form (Richards reports he "worked brilliantly" in a racecourse gallop at Newcastle last week). His subsequent defeat in the Gold Cup was surely due to something other than lack of stamina, so quickly did he stop between the last two fences. Scotton Banks beat Barton Bank 15 lengths in the Martell Cup at Aintree before being pulled up in the Whitbread (Barton Bank seventh and Young Hustler ninth). He could be the one to give One Man most to do if in similar form to Aintree, but Young Hustler can prove the sharper and he is the forecast choice in receipt of 8lb from his three rivals. **Selection:** ONE MAN

4.00 WENSLEYDALE NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS A) (Grade 2) £15,000 3YO 2m Penalty Value £9,690 C4

1 1 KERAWI (8) (D) (M Archer & Miss J Broadhurst) N Twiston-Davies 11 2 ... C Llewellyn
2 121 KERNOF (27) (D) (J M Gordon) M Hammond 11 2 ... C O'Dwyer 8
3 1 LAGAN (17) (CD) (Web Racing) K Morgan 11 2 ... A S Smith
4 BELLATOR (P Richardson) G Balding 10 12 ... B Fenton
5 GULF OF SIAM (C Platts) Miss S Hall 10 12 ... D Bentley
6 14 HEVER GOLF DIAMOND (18) (D) (Hever Racing Club) T J Naughton 10 12 ... R Dunwoody
7 5 JACKSON PARK (17) (C H Stevens) T Easterby 10 12 ... L Wyer
8 00 PHANTOM DANCER (17) (M E Sowersby) M Sowersby 10 12 ... G Cahill
9 13 PRELUDE TO FAME (49) (BF) (Jumbo Racing Club) Miss M Milligan 10 12 ... A Maguire
10 SIX CLERKS (Marquesa de Moratalla) J FitzGerald 10 12 ... F Leahy
11 SIZZLING SYMPHONY (J A Campbell) R Fahey 10 12 ... Derek Byrne
12 51 HOBBS CHOICE (21) (D) (Miss Le Hobbs) G M Moore 10 7 ... N Bentley

– 12 declared –

BETTING: 9-4 Kerawi, 9-2 Lagan, 6-1 Bellator, 8-1 Jackson Park, 10-1 Hever Golf Diamond, Hobbs Choice, Kernof, 12-1 Six Clerks, 14-1 others

1995: Shining Edge 3 10 12 R Garritty 11-2 (M H Easterby) 6 ran

FORM GUIDE

LAGAN was very ordinary on the Flat but proved a different proposition when put over hurdles, jumping well and making all to beat Falcon's Flame five lengths in a 19-runner race over course and distance, with **Jackson Park** fifth and **Phantom Dancer** seventh. He can win again. **Kerawi** did not race on the Flat but that did not prevent him from making a winning debut at Newbury recently, beating Le Teteu a length and a half, and he has an obvious chance. **Prelude To Fame** looked good when winning at Cartmel on his hurdling bow but found the eight-length runner-up, Go-Go-Power-Ranger, reversing the form at Sedgefield last time. That still represents good juvenile form – **Hobbs Choice**, fifth at Sedgefield, won at Hexham last month. Richard Dunwoody appears to prefer **Hever Golf Diamond**, who had a big weight when fourth to Contosser in a Taunton claiming hurdle last time, to Jimmy FitzGerald's **Six Clerks**, a maiden on the Flat. **Kernof**, successful at Market Rasen and Kelso, faces a much stiffer task in this company. A bigger danger should be hurdling debutant **Bellator**, much the best of these on the Flat and in good form in recent weeks. **Selection:** LAGAN

Llanelli fired by the old romance

Chris Hewett on the final pool matches in rugby union's European Cup

Financial uncertainty, two missing New Zealanders and an injury list so long that Stradey Park may soon be awarded National Health Trust status. Just at the moment, the rugby romantics of Llanelli are finding it difficult to escape the mundane practicalities of life.

The Scarlet faithful have constructed an entire rugby folklore around the red-shirted legends of their colourful and often glorious past.

For 80 minutes this afternoon, however, the old dreams will come alive once again. The Welshmen are at Leicester for a do-or-die game in Pool B of the Heineken European Cup, where a point will give them a precious place in the knock-out phase of a competition that is becoming more compelling by the day. It is a big occasion and in Llanelli, big occasions are what makes life worth living.

Now that their season-long casualty crisis has forced them to field the injured flanker Paul Morris as a desperation measure against Dean Richards' mighty pack today, some 3,000 travelling supporters will be anticipating another memorable display of backs-to-the-wall heroism.

Ah, the great men of yesteryear – Carwyn, Delme, JJ, Grav, Benny. Somehow, the name Rupert Henry St John Barker Moon does not sit easily in the pantheon, but if anyone can generate the right sort of fever amongst the Scarlets in the inhospitable surroundings of Welford Road, it is their much-travelled, much-battered but irrepressible scrum-half.

"We've been building for this one for the last two weeks, ever since it became clear that we would need a result to reach the last eight," said Moon, a good Midlands lad from Birmingham who once captained Richards and sundry other Tigers at divisional level and won England B honours before switching allegiance to play 18 times for Wales.

"It's all on today, isn't it? We've got terrible injury problems at the moment, but with Ieuan Evans and Wayne Proctor back in the side we're in there with a shout. It's the sort of game that tends to bring out the best in us."

Moon is carefully constructing a new half-back partnership with Frano Botica, the former New Zealand outside-half who arrived at Stradey last month after a successful career in rugby league and a controversially brief sojourn at Orrell.

"He's some player," Moon said. "It's wonderful to see how his influence and experience are beginning to seep through the side, giving us all new confidence and a sense of direction. When you have someone of Frano's quality in a really important position, it works wonders for your self-belief.

"We've had an up and down season and it's only our home form that has held us together. We no longer seem to be able to go 20 minutes down the road without falling apart [but] much of that is down to the fatigue factor caused by an injury list that forces those players still standing to take on too many matches.

"I'm also aware that in the professional era there is less room for the kind of excuse I've just given. We need to start doing it away from Stradey and today is as good a time as any."

Botica's arrival at Llanelli should have been eased by the presence of two formidable countrymen, the prop, Steve McDowell, and the aggressive North Harbour back-row man, Richard Turner but both are still in New Zealand awaiting playing permits.

There is also concern in some Stradey quarters that the club is nowhere near as financially sound as it appeared to be at the start of the season and that, as a result, McDowell and Turner are no longer a cost-effective proposition.

The existing players are on generous salaries, however, and as Moon says, "the pride and passion are still burning bright in the dressing-room." If the starry-eyed visionaries are to survive against the methodical realists of the Leicester pack, they will need all that and more.

In Pool A, Bath are also on the road for an equally important game with Treviso in north-east Italy. Their much-criticised pack restored at least some credibility in last weekend's struggle with Dax but John Hall, the Bath team manager, has gone ahead with plans to bolster his forward strength by signing the Argentinian Federico Mendez.

The 19st hooker has been playing with Natal in South Africa's domestic Currie Cup tournament but he watched Bath inflict a record defeat on Bristol earlier this week and agreed terms after detailed discussions with Hall and representatives of Bath's millionaire backer, Andrew Brownsword.

Hall, who said his new recruit would be available in the near future, is also thought to be interested in two locks, the Natal and Springbok Steve Atherton, and the Bristol and England squad member, Simon Shaw.

The European Cup: how they stand

Pool A

Very tight indeed. The most competitive group of the four will go down to the wire, with points difference the crucial factor. Bath, the English champions, can still win the pool and so guarantee themselves a home quarter-final, but their only priority in Italy this afternoon will be to beat an awkward Treviso side who still have a mathematical chance, albeit a slim one, of staying in the tournament. Dax have home advantage against Pontypridd and a decisive victory will leave the Welshmen reaching for their pocket calculators.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Pontypridd	3	3	0	0	79	38	6
Dax	3	2	0	1	119	51	4
Bath	3	2	0	1	86	61	4
Treviso	3	1	0	2	79	85	2
Edinburgh	4	0	0	4	71	199	0

Previous results: Bath 55 Edinburgh 26; Pontypridd 28 Treviso 22; Edinburgh 10 Pontypridd 32; Treviso 14 Dax 34; Pontypridd 19 Bath 6; Dax 69 Edinburgh 12; Bath 25 Dax 16; Edinburgh 23 Treviso 43.

Today: Dax v Pontypridd, Treviso v Bath.

Pool B

Leicester's outstanding victory over the hard men of Pau in France last weekend guaranteed them a place in the last eight and Llanelli, who need a point at Welford Road to book their own place in the knock-out phase, will be hoping the Tigers relax a touch too much this afternoon. Defeat for the Welsh side will leave them waiting anxiously for news from Dublin where Pau, with a superior points difference, must beat Leinster to keep alive their own qualification hopes.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leicester	3	3	0	0	89	27	6
Llanelli	3	2	0	1	81	56	4
Pau	3	1	0	2	114	78	2
Leinster	3	1	0	2	61	86	2
S Borders	4	1	0	3	80	178	2

Previous results: Llanelli 34 Leinster 17; Pau 85 Scottish Borders 28; Scottish Borders 24 Llanelli 18; Leinster 10 Leicester 27; Llanelli 31 Pau 15; Leicester 43 Scottish Borders 3; Pau 14 Leicester 19; Scottish Borders 25 Leinster 34.

Today: Leicester v Llanelli, Leinster v Pau.

Pool C

The clearest-cut of the groups. Brive are already in the last eight, but need to beat a dangerous Ulster side in Belfast to secure a home tie – a task not eased by the fact that Denis McBride and company still have a long shot at qualification themselves. Sadly for them, they need Harlequins to slip up at home against Caledonia, who look a safe bet for a whitewash despite their ability to score handsomely against quality opposition. Quins need Brive to lose today if they are to avoid a likely last eight trip to Leicester.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brive	3	3	0	0	89	59	6
Harlequins	3	2	0	1	75	60	4
Neath	4	2	0	2	83	109	4
Ulster	3	1	0	2	69	70	2
Caledonia	3	0	0	3	82	100	0

Previous results: Brive 34 Neath 19; Caledonia 34 Ulster 41; Neath 27 Caledonia 18; Ulster 15 Harlequins 21; Harlequins 44 Neath 22; Caledonia 30 Brive 32; Neath 15 Ulster 13; Brive 23 Harlequins 10.

Today: Harlequins v Caledonia, Ulster v Brive.

Pool D

It's winner-take-all at Les Sept-Deniers where Toulouse, still trying to put their world back on its axis after that 70-point hiding at Wasps last week, take on the fire and fury of Munster. An Irish victory in France would be an outstanding achievement but is not a realistic expectation. However, they need only a point to qualify and the reigning European champions have been struggling all season. Sadly for Wasps today's match in Milan is stone cold dead.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cardiff	4	3	0	1	135	97	6
Munster	3	2	0	1	90	75	4
Toulouse	3	2	0	1	97	123	4
Wasps	3	1	0	2	123	92	2
Milan	3	0	0	3	50	108	0

Previous results: Munster 33 Milan 5; Wasps 24 Cardiff 26; Cardiff 48 Munster 18; Milan 26 Toulouse 44; Munster 49 Wasps 22; Toulouse 36 Cardiff 20; Wasps 77 Toulouse 17; Cardiff 41 Milan 19.

Today: Toulouse v Munster, Milan v Wasps.

Scotland's new captain, Gregor Townsend, is an instinctive player Photograph: Empics

New role for Townsend

Scotland the brave lived up to their historic reputation yesterday by naming Gregor Townsend, their most instinctive and creative talent, as captain for next week's international against Australia at Murrayfield, **writes Chris Hewett.**

It is always a bold move to place the burdens of leadership on a determined individualist but the Scottish selectors believe Townsend is no longer the free-thinking maverick of old.

The versatile Northampton back takes the reins from Rob Wainwright, who led the Scots to the brink of a Grand Slam last season but who is now struggling with a groin condition. Scott Hastings, the most-capped Scottish player, also came under consideration but was finally overlooked, although he is named in a 21-strong squad.

Townsend was last season's vice-captain and led a Scottish XV against the Barbarians in the Dunblane Memorial match at the start of the season.

Gary Armstrong, his half-back partner during last summer's tour of New Zealand said he "puts the spark into the team and leads by example."

One awkward question facing the selectors is where to play the 23-year-old. Townsend set the 1995 Five Nations' Championship alight with some virtuoso performances as outside-half, but he is playing regularly in the centre at club level and will have to do so against the Wallabies if the selectors insist on picking Craig Chalmers.

Yesterday the Scottish camp indicated that they might wait until the morning of the game before naming their line-up and would also consider the use of tactical substitutions under a change of rules ratified by the International Board last month.

SCOTLAND SQUAD (v Australia, Murrayfield, 9 November 3): **Backs:** G Armstrong (Newcastle), C Chalmers (Melrose), R Ellis(on (London Scottish), S Hastings (Watsonians), K Logan (Stirling County), B Redpath (Melrose), R Shepherd (Melrose), A Stanger (Hawick), D Stark (Melrose), G Townsend (Northampton, capt). **Forwards:** D Cronin (Wasps), G Ellis (Currie), D Hilton (Bath), K McKenzie (Stirling County), S Murray (Bedford), E Peters (Bath), I Smith (Gloucester), T Smith (Watsonians), B Stewart (Edinburgh Academicals), E Wallace (GHK), G Weir (Newcastle).

■ Lawrence Dallaglio's fears of being called up for military service in Italy were dispelled yesterday. Dallaglio, whose father is Italian, could have been conscripted after entering the country for Wasps' match against Milan today but the player has acquired a vital entry in his passport from the Italian embassy which prevents him from being conscripted.

HIV-infected Morrison makes 'no risk' return

Boxing

GLYN LEACH reports from Tokyo

Tomorrow's promotion here in Tokyo, headlined by George Foreman's World Boxing Union heavyweight title defence against Crawford Grimsley, becomes a test case for HIV in boxing when the former World Boxing Organisation heavyweight champion Tommy Morrison, diagnosed HIV positive in February this year, makes a comeback bout.

Morrison, 27, claims he is fighting on to provide funds for his HIV children's foundation. But the sad possibility exists that here is another example of a fighter who just cannot say goodbye.

Morrison, from Jay, Oklahoma, has been fighting since the age of 13 and perhaps he does not know what else to do with his life. His presence in Tokyo has caused considerable controversy. The indications are that some Japanese did not realise Morrison's predicament at first. Morrison has become something of a freak show for the local media, who have turned out in force to question him on Aids-related issues.

"One thing I want to make clear is that I don't want to put anyone's life in danger – including my own," he told a packed press conference yesterday. "We feel we have taken every suitable precaution to protect everyone involved in this event."

The major fear is that Morrison will be cut during the fight and that his blood might come into contact with others. If a cut occurs, he will be given a one-minute "time out" for his corner to try to stop the bleeding. If they cannot, the fight will be terminated and the winner will be decided by the judges' scores up to that point in the contest. "That's the only way I'm willing to do this," Morrison said.

"But I've had 49 fights and I've only been cut four times. There's no way I could be described as a bleeder. And if there's no blood, there's no danger."

Morrison claimed that since announcing that he wished to box again "four or five" American states had contacted him with a view to his fighting under their jurisdiction, but that 21 others had outlawed him due to his condition. He denied that fighting in Japan, on a show which is not recognised by the Japanese Boxing Commission, was his only realistic option, saying rather unconvincingly that he had always wanted to visit the Land of the Rising Sun.

Morrison added that "some of the best doctors in the world" have told him there is "absolutely no risk" to his opponent, to the fight's referee, or to spectators at ringside. "Once your body's controlling the virus – which mine is – this stuff is extremely hard to catch," Morrison said.

Medical opinion is divided on this issue and there has been considerable criticism of Morrison, most notably from fellow HIV victim Magic Johnson, the LA Lakers basketball player who discovered he had contracted the virus five years ago but resumed playing last year.

Morrison appears to have experienced little difficulty in finding an opponent for this fight. When the journeyman Anthony Cooks was forced to pull out (wanted by the police seemingly for every crime bar the kidnapping of Shergar), 24-year-old Marcus Rhode, a fighter with a promising record of 15 victories, 15 knock-outs and one defeat, stepped in at a moment's notice.

"This guy doesn't need to worry about my virus, he needs to worry about my left hook trying to take his head off," Morrison said. "He's a much better standard of opponent than I planned to meet after a year's lay-off, but I'm looking forward to it – I feel healthy; everything's fine." If only it were.

Minnows on a hiding

Basketball

RICHARD TAYLOR

Upsets will be as thin on the ground as high-scoring Englishmen this weekend when Budweiser League clubs bring to bear the full weight of their American-stacked line-ups in the first round of the Classic Cola National Cup.

Only the top three clubs from last season's First Division – Ware Rebels, Coventry Crusaders and Cardiff Phoenix – have been permitted a tilt at the Budweiser heavyweights who are allowed to use up to five Americans in their line-ups, compared with two per team in the First Division.

Sheffield Sharks visit Coventry, whose player-coach, Dip Donaldson, wishes he could use his 7ft 1in older brother James, an NBA veteran. As well as facing Sheffield's American quartet of Todd Cauthorn, Chris Finch, Voise Winters and Deon Hanes, the Crusaders will also have to deal with the 6ft 8in Roger Huggins.

The League's top two clubs, Leopards and Chester Jets, meet in the tie of the round. Chester's 94-90 overtime league defeat against Leopards last month was their only loss in six games.

WEEKEND FIXTURE GUIDE

TODAY

Football

Matches not on pools coupons; 3.0 unless stated

GM VAUXHALL CONFERENCE: Altrincham v Stevenage Borough; Hayes v Kettering; Gateshead v Kidderminster; Farnborough, Morecambe v Bath; Northwich v Hayes; Southport v Rushden; Stalybridge v Bromsgrove; Stevenage v Welling; Telford v Macclesfield; Welling v Hednesford.

ICIS LEAGUE Premier Division: Aylesbury v Yeovil; Dagenham v Oxford City; Grays v Bromley; Harrow Borough v Hendon; Hitchin v Dagenham; Kingstonian v Carshalton; Purfleet v Yeading; St Albans v Chertsey; Staines v Boreham Wood; Sutton Utd v Bishop's Stortford. **First Division:** Aldershot Town v Slough; Basingstoke v Marlow; Berkhamsted v Croydon; Bognor Regis v Balcombe; Canvey Island v Wokingham; Hampton v Walton & Hersham; Leyton Pennant v Uxbridge; Thame v Molesey; Tonbridge v Merstham v Abingdon Town; Whyteleafe v Chertsey; Worthing v Maidenhead. **Second Division:** Banstead v Wembley; Bedfordshire Town v Chertsey; Cheshunt v Barking; Hemel Hempstead v Hungerford; Kembley v Cove; Rye & Romford. **Third Division:** Camberley v Southall; Hornchurch v Ilford.

UNIBOND LEAGUE Premier Division: Barrow v Frickley; Bishop Auckland v Colwyn Bay; Boston Utd v Witton; Burton v Blyth Spartans; Chorley v Hyde; Emley v Stamfordham; Gainsborough v Accrington; Knowsley v Alfreton Town; Guiseley Runcorn v Lancaster; Winsford v Mossley. **First Division:** Eastham Park Avenue v Leigh; Congleton v Hanley; Tiber Curzon Ashton v Netherfield; Earlestown Town v Frickley; Farsley v Atherton LR; Great Harwood v Marlock; Radcliffe v Whitby; Rossington v Denaby; Stamfordham v Lincoln City; Workington v Worksop.

DR MARTENS LEAGUE Premier Division: Bath City v Gresley; Burton v Gloucester; Cambridge City v Hastings; Cheltenham v Ashford; Chelsey v Newport AFC; Dorchester v Nuneaton; Gravesend v King's Lynn; Merthyr Tydfil v Chelmsford; Stratford v Ebbsfleet; Sudbury Town v Halesowen Town; Worcester v Salisbury. **Midland Division:** Bedworth v Evesham; Bilston v Grantham; Corby v Hinckley Town; Dudley v Stourbridge; Paget v Warwick; Redditch v Beaston; Shepshed v Stafford; Solihull v Sutton Coldfield; Tamworth v Rounds; VS Rugby v Moor Green. **Southern Division:** Bashley v Forest Green; Buckingham Town v Waterlooville; Cinderford v Havant; Erith v Tonbridge; Fareham v Newport IoW; Fleet v Dartford; Margate v Gravesend; St Leonards v Fisher; Trowbridge v Weymouth; Weston v Yate; Witney v Clevedon.

FA CARLSBERG VASE First round: Burscough v Trafford; Shotmersdale v Formby, Poulton v Ferryhill; Whitby v Crook; Blackpool Rovers v Consett; Shildon v Bedlington, Annfield Plain v Vauxhall GM (2.15); Hadrington v Alnwick; Penrice v Tetley Walker; Brandon v Oldham Town; Easington v Whickham; Ossett Town v Holker Old Boys; Sheffield v RTM Newcastle; North Ferriby v Pontefract; Shotton Comrades v Tow Law; South Shields v Northallerton; Grese v Thackley; Ossett Albion v Pontefract; Eccleshill v Morpeth; Denaby v Worsborough Bridge; Hallam v Hatfield Main; Long Buckby v Oadby; Barrow Town v Sunpaell (2.15); Borrowash v Arnold; Stewarts & Lloyds Corby v Anstey Nomads; Stratford v Brackley; Gaywell v Pelsall; Bolsover v Ashfield; Newcastle Town v Lye; Stourbridge v Pear Lane OB; Bloxwich v Hucknall; Shirebrook v Hinckley Athletic; Carlemore v Chasetown; St Andrews v Deshorough, Gedling v Sheffield; Dunkirk v Belsize (2.15); Mansfield v Willenhall; Pershore v Louth; London Colney v Harlow; Brantree v Great Wakering; Concord v Witham, Clapton v Southend Manor; Hackleyh v Sheppham; Chalfont St Peter v Leverstock Green; Cockfosters v Boston Town (2.15); Spalding v Woodstone; Fakenham v Woodbridge; Viking Sports v Brache Sports; Gorleston v Ipswich Wanderers; Stotfold v Felmersham; Ford Utd v Aveley; Saffron Walden v Harwich & Parkeston; Wootton Blue Cross v Northwood; Royston v Wisbech, Ware v Felixstowe; Histon v Stansted; East Thurrock v Lowestoft; Tiptree v Barkingside; Brentwood v Maldon; Stamford v Edgware; Potton v Whitton; Bedford Utd v Eynesbury (2.15); Whitehawk v BAT Sports; Wantage v Bracknell; Langney v Chatham; Ringmer v Burnham; Arundel v Greenwich; Dorking v Reading Town; Ashford (Middx) v Horsham; Carterton v North Leigh; Abingdon Utd v Epsom & Ewell; Southwick v Whitstable; Slade Green v Thamesmead; Burgess Hill v Leatherhead; Windsor & Eton v Thatcham; Beckenham v Redhill; Wick v Cray; Hassocks v Herne Bay; Sheppey v Paghamr; Hailsham v Furness; First Tower v Godalming & Guildford (2.0); Selsey v Gosport; Fareham v Chippenham (2.15); Tonnington v Odd Down; Shortwood v Tiverton; Bideford v Endsleigh; Portkewen v Barnerton Heath (2.15); Bridgwater v Downton; Minehead v Amesbury; Devizes v Christchurch; Badgeley v Wiscombe; Almondsbury v Paulton; Saltash v Cadbury Heath; Brockenhurst v Dawlish, Truro v Bridport; Lymington v Wimborne.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: Crockenhill v Hythe (2.15); Deal v Cammon; Folkestone v Faversham; Lordswood v Woolwich (2.15); Ramsgate v Tunbridge Wells.

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE First Division: Eastbourne Town v Peacehaven; Mile Oak v Three Bridges; Oakwood v Horsham YMCA; Selsdeen v Portfield. **John O'Hara League Cup second round:** Bexhill v Shoreham (2.0)

UNIJSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE Premier Division: Bourne v St Neots; Ford Sports v Kempston; Holbeach v Newport Pagnell; Wellingborough v Northampton Spencer.

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE Premier Division: Calne v Barnstaple; Chard v Elmore; Taunton v Bristol Manor Farm; Westbury v Mangotsfield.

NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE Premier Division: Belper v Armthorpe; Brigg v Pickering; Glasshoughton v Pontefract; Selby v Liversedge.

NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE First Division: Atherton Collieries v Chadderton; Bootle v Glossop; Clitheroe v Eastwood Hanley; Darwen v Penrith; Kidsgrove v Salford; Mossley v Marine Road; Prescot v Rossendale. **Challenge Cup first round replay:** Maghull v St Helens (1.30).

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: Cowes v Romsey; Eastleigh v Totton; Petersfield v Bournemouth FC; Portsmouth v East Cowes; Whitchurch v Ryde Sports.

JEWSON EASTERN LEAGUE Premier Division: Clacton v Diss; Great Yarmouth v Sudbury Town; Soham v Bury Town; Saxmundham v Halstead; Sudbury Wanderers v Walton; Warboys v Newmarket; Wroxham v March.

INTERLINK EXPRESS MIDLAND ALLIANCE: Blakenall v Barwell; Halesowen Harriers v Bridgnorth; Knypersley v Rushall; Oldbury v West Midlands Police.

FEDERATION BREWERY NORTHERN LEAGUE First Division: Chester-le-Street v Dunston; Stockton v Durham; Guisborough v West Auckland; Seaham Red Star v Marsden.

LEAGUE OF WALES: Bryn Ferry v Holywell; Caernarfon v Oswestry; Caersws v Ton Pentre (2.30); Cemaes Bay v Ebbw Vale; Connah's Quay v Barry (2.0); Conwy v Flint; Inter Cable-Tel Cardiff v Newtown; Porthmadog v Llansantffraid; Rhyl v Aberystwyth; Welshpool v Bangor City.

PRESS & JOURNAL HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Brora v Lossiemouth; Clachnacuddin v Fraserburgh; Cove Rangers v Rothes; Elgin v Forres Mechanics; Fort William v Buckie Thistle (2.15); Nairn County v Deveronvale, Wick Academy v Inch.

SCOTTISH QUALIFYING CUP (North) Semi-final replay: Peterhead v Huntly.

SWEENEY'S IRISH LEAGUE Premier Division: Ards v Glentoran; Crusaders v Glentoran; Linfield v Cliftonville; Portadown v Coleraine. **First Division:** Ballymena v Larne; Carrick v Omagh; Distillery v Bangor; Newry v Ballyclare.

HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE OF IRELAND Premier Division: Derry City v St Patrick's Athletic (7.30); Home Farm Everton v Shelbourne (7.30).

Rugby Union

3.0 unless stated

TOUR MATCHES: Cambridge University v Junior Springboks; Combined Glasgow-Edinburgh v Australia (2.15) (at Anniesland).

HEINEKEN CUP Pool A: Benetton Treviso v Bath (1.30); Dax v Pontypridd (6.30). **Pool B:** Leicester v Llanelli; Leinster v Pau (2.30) (at Donnybrook). **Pool C:** Harlequins v Caledonia; Ulster v Brive (2.30) (at Ravenhill). **Pool D:** Milan v Wasps (1.30); Toulouse v Munster.

EUROPEAN CONFERENCE Pool A: Clermont-Ferrand v Newport (2.0); Saix v Newbridge: **Pool B:** Dinamo Bucharest v Bristol (1.0); Narbonne v Castres (6.30); Treorchy v Bridgend (2.30). **Pool C:** Connacht v Orrell (2.30) (at Galway); Dunvant v Toulon (2.30); Padova v Northampton (1.30). **Pool D:** Begles v Ebbw Vale (7.30); Bourgoin v Swansea (2.0); London Irish v Gloucester.

PILKINGTON CUP Third round: Bridlington v Wigton (2.30); Cheltenham v Henley (2.30); Esher v Bracknell (2.30); Exeter v Barnstaple; Leeds v Redruth; Liverpool St Helens v Walsall (2.30); London Welsh v Rosslyn Park (2.30); Morley v Aspatria; Newbury v Clifton (2.30); Otley v Wharfedale (2.15); Preston Grasshoppers v Fylde (2.30); Rosslyn Park v Havant (2.30); Sandal v Kendal (2.15); Swansea & Wrexham v Lydney (2.30); Weston-S-Mare v Bishop's Stortford; Widnes v Hartlepool (2.30).

COURAGE CLUBS CHAMPIONSHIP National League Three: Bedford v Moseley; Blackheath v Rugby; Coventry v Newcastle; Nottingham v Wakefield; Richmond v Waterloo; Rotherham v London Scottish (2.15).

WELSH NATIONAL LEAGUE Second Division: Aberavon v Bonymaen (2.30); Blackwood v Abertyron (2.30); Maesteg v Cross Keys (2.30); Pontypool v UWIC (Cardiff Inst) (2.30); South Wales Police v Abertillery (2.30); Ystradgynlais v Llandovery (2.30).

CLUB MATCHES (all 2.30): Ayr v Glasgow Southern; Biggar v Glenrothes; Birmingham/Solihull v New Brighton; Boroughmuir v Preston Lodge; Corstorphine v Edinburgh Wrens; Currie v Alnwick; Dundee HSFP v Heriot's FP; Hawick v Selkirk; Hereford v Gloucester OB; High Wycombe v Ealing; Hillhead/Jordanhill v Glasgow Acads; Kilmarnock v Gordonians; Kirkcaldy v West of Scotland; Melrose v Kelso; Peebles v Jed-Forest; Watsonians v Edinburgh Acads; Lichfield v Burton; Derby v Stourbridge; Worcester v Loughborough Univers.

Hockey

NASTRO AZZURRO SOUTH Premier: Anchorians v High Wycombe; Beckenham v Bournemouth; Fareham v Tunbridge Wells; Gore Court v Ramgarhia; Hampstead & Westminster v Winchester; Maidenhead v Wokingham; Old Kingstonians v Wimbledon; Old Whitgiftians v Woking; Richmond v Ashford; Spencer v Chichester.

ADNAMS EAST Premier: Bishops Stortford v Cambridge City; Colchester v Chelmsford; Ipswich v Sudbury; Peterborough Town v Cambridge Univ; Redbridge & Ilford v Dereham.

DTZ MIDLAND Premier: Blossomfield v Khalsa; Hampton-in-Arden v Coventry & North Warwick; Harborne v Bloxwich; Nottingham v North Notts; Olton & West Warwick v Loughborough Students.

NORTH Premier: Ben Rhydding v Formby; Harrogate v Norton; Neston v Sheffield Bankers; Ramgarhia v Southport; Springfields v Timperley; Swallowell v Chester.

SUNLIFE WEST OF ENGLAND & SOUTH WALES Premier: Bath Buccs v Pyrohount; Bristol Univ v Swansea; Clevedon v Robinsons; Llanelhen & Llandaff v Taunton Vale, Weston super Mare v Winchcurch.

WOMEN'S NATIONAL LEAGUE Premier: Doncaster v Hightown (12.0); Ipswich v Balsam Leicester (12.0); Sutton Coldfield v Slough (11.30); Trojans v Clifton (1.30). **First Division:** Bracknell v Bradford Swinthonbank (2.0); Chelmsford Broadoak v Orion (11.15); Sunderland Bedans v Canterbury (1.0); Wimbledon v Blueherts (12.0). **Second Division:** Exmouth v Loughborough Students (12.0); Old Loughtonians v Sherwood (1.0); St Albans v Woking (1.30); West Witney v Ealing (12.0).

WOMEN'S NORTH First Division: Blackburn v Carlisle; Liverpool v York; Penylan v Chester; York v Sheffield.

ROYAL AL-FAISEL WOMEN'S MIDLAND Premier: Balsam Leicester v Alcridge; Hampton-in-Arden v North Staffs; Pickwick v Bedford; West Bromwich v Crimson Ramblers.

WOMEN'S EAST SUPER LEAGUE Premier: Bury St Edmunds v Ashford; Cambridge City v Ipswich; Harleston Magpies v Bedfordshire; Welwyn Garden City v Sevenoaks.

WOMEN'S WEST Premier: Cheltenham v Colwall; Exeter v Bournemouth; Redland v St Austell; Yate v Wimborne Wayfarers.

WOMEN'S SOUTH First Division: Dulwich v Tulse Hill; Horsham v City of Portsmouth; Hampstead & Westminster v Reading; Southampton v Winchmore Hill; Worthing v Winchester.

TRYSPORTS WOMEN'S THREE COUNTIES First Division: Amersham v Maidenhead; Bracknell v Oxford Univ; Henley v Wokingham; Milton Keynes v Wycombe Rye; Ravelaigh v Slough; Reading v City of Oxford; Sonning v Newbury; West Witney v Farnham Common.

Basketball

CLASSIC COLA CUP: Manchester Giants v Crystal Palace (7.30); Coventry Crusaders v Sheffield Sharks (7.30); Peugeot Bullets Birmingham v Hemel & Watford Royals (7.30); Cardiff Phoenix v London Towers (8.0); Ware Rebels v Newcastle Eagles (8.0); Thames Valley Tigers v Derby Storm (8.0); Worthing Bears v Leicester Riders (8.0)

Ice hockey

SUPERLEAGUE: Bracknell Bees v Manchester Storm (6.0); Nottingham Panthers v Cardiff Devils (7.0); Sheffield Steelers v Newcastle Cobras (7.0). Ayr Scottish Eagles v Bracknell Bees (6.30); Cardiff Devils v Newcastle Cobras (6.0); Manchester Storm v Basingstoke Bison (6.0).

Other sports

NETBALL: Test Match: England v Jamaica (2.45) (NEC Arena, Birmingham).

TENNIS: Women's Challenger (Edinburgh).

TOMORROW

Football

UNIBOND LEAGUE Premier Division: Spennymoor v Colwyn Bay (11.0).

HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE OF IRELAND Premier Division: Bray Wanderers v Finn Harps (2.45); Kildare v Cork City (3.15); Shamrock Rovers v University College Dublin (3.15).

Hockey

NATIONAL LEAGUE Premier Division: Barford Tigers v Harcourt (1.0); Guildford v Reading (12.0); Hounslow v Canterbury (2.0); Old Loughtonians v East Grinstead (1.30); Surbiton v Southgate (2.30); Teddington v Cannock (12.0). **First Division:** Beeston v Sheffield (2.0); Bournville v St Albans (2.30); Bromley v Stourport (3.0); Brooklands v Trojans (2.0); City of Portsmouth v Warrington (1.30); Clostyn v Harleston Magpies (3.0); Doncaster v Gloucester City (2.0); Edgbaston v Firebands (2.30); Hull v Leeds (2.0); Indian Gymkhana v Oxford Univ (2.30); Isca v Oxford Hawks (12.30).

AEMIA CUP Second round: Ashford (Kent) v Wallington; Beckenham v Cheam; Bishops Stortford v Basildon; Bridgnorth v Hereford; Chemock v Abingdon; Eastcote v Berkhamsted & Hemel Hempstead; Epsom v Wokingham; Farnborough v Sonning; Guildford v Gore Court; Harborne v Dudley; Harleston Magpies v Cambridge Univ; Hendon v Burnt Ash; Horsham v Camberley; Hotspring v Lillington; Leyland Motors v Poynton; Lincoln Imps v Norwich Union; Liverpool v Bowdon; Luton Town v Buckingham; Maidenhead v Basingstoke; Manchester Pirates v Delbury; Milton Keynes v Bedford; Morpeth v Billingham; North Staffs v Worcester Norton; Norwich City v Bury St Edmunds; Penzance v Exmouth; Polyechnic v Welwyn Garden City; Reading v Southampton; Redditch v East Gloucester; Sheffield v Ormskirk Fore; Southgate v Belsedere; Surrey v Broxbourne; Stockton v Newcastle; Sunbury v South Herts; Swindon v Rover Cowley; Tee Valley v Budc; Whitley Bay v Driffield; Winchester v Newbury; Winchmore Hill v Braintree; Wrrington Park v Blackburn; Wolverhampton v Crewson Ramblers; Yate & South Gloucester v Exeter.

Basketball

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Sheffield Sharks v Peugeot Bullets Birmingham (7.0); Ewde London Towers v Butlin's Worthing Bears (5.0).

CLASSIC COLA CUP: Chester Jets v Playboy TV Leopards (8.0).

Ice hockey

SUPERLEAGUE: Ayr Scottish Eagles v Bracknell Bees (6.30); Cardiff Devils v Newcastle Cobras (6.0); Manchester Storm v Basingstoke Bison (6.0).

Other sports

TENNIS: Women's Challenger (Edinburgh).

Britons' big impression

Sailing

STUART ALEXANDER reports from Les Sables d'Olonne

British hopes of winning what is undoubtedly the toughest test for racing yachtsmen and women, the Vendée Globe singlehanded non-stop round the world race, are decidedly slim. But, as they head out into the Atlantic here tomorrow, both Pete Goss and Tony Bullimore will know they have made a bigger impression in the host country, France, than they have achieved at home.

All week, queues of people 200 yards long and four deep have snaked their way to the pontoons where the 16 yachts, all but Goss's 60 feet long, have been going through their final preparations. Last Sunday alone, 17,000 people turned up to view not just their sporting heroes but the amazing boats they will drive for between 110 and 120 days, 24 hours a day, through some of the most treacherous seas and conditions as they circle Antarctica.

VENDEE GLOBE

10°e 30°e 30°w Canaries AFRICA SOUTH AMERICA ANTARCTICA AUSTRALIA

Nor was the organisation entirely sure how many competitors there would be. Fifteen are definite with the case of the recently qualified Raphael Dinelli still being considered. Hungary's Nandor Fa, Belgium's Patrick de Radigues, and Canada's Gerry Roufs complete the outside challenge to an event organised by and still dominated by the French.

Sporting the most radical approach is Yves Parlier, whose Aquitaine Innovations has cost another £125,000 to beef up a mast and supporting beams which let him down in last year's singlehanded transatlantic race. It gives him a swivelling mast of the kind more favoured by multihulls, which should mean more speed but can also mean more problems where there is no one to solve them. Parlier also has to worry about Christophe Augin, twice a winner of the BOC race, whose Geodis looks to be a formidably powerful machine.

There are two women in the race. The irrepressible Isabelle Autissier in her new £1m PRB, complete with the same sort of swinging keel featured on Goss's Aqua Quorum, and Catherine Chabaud in the rather older Whirlpool.

Autissier was strongly ahead in the last BOC race until her yacht was first dismasted and then lost as she was rescued by the Australian navy. "I have never had any nightmares about that," she said yesterday. "It's part of my life, part of my job. You cannot take revenge on the sea or the wind."

Are the FA not aware that absence makes the heart grow fonder

Olivia Blair

ON SATURDAY

Just like the national curriculum, Government policies and the Royal family, football has had to change with the times. Indeed, many of the recent changes means it is approaching the millennium in a healthier state than ever before instead of being dragged kicking and screaming into the 21st century. However, it still seems that the game is undergoing a programme of plastic surgery that threatens to give it an ugly countenance and render it unrecognisable from the beautiful game it was designed to be.

Take this week for example. Not only has the idea resurfaced – at the suggestion of two German television companies – that a match should consist of three periods of 30 minutes rather than the traditional two halves (a proposal which would concede further ground to television in the power struggle for football's supremacy), but the Football Association has announced plans for a 12-month season to avoid fixture congestion. Is the FA not aware that absence makes the heart grow fonder, of the "scarcity value of the game", as the agent Jon Holmes put it?

Obviously not, but as we approach yet another period of postponed games due to international matches, the fact is that domestic fixture congestion is threatening to make a mockery of the notion that football is a simple game affording simple pleasures.

Time was when a fan's week consisted of Saturday afternoon games with the odd midweek clash thrown in for good measure. Now, you pays your money and you take your chances: Friday night; Saturdays (morning or afternoon for heaven's sake); Sundays at 1pm or 4pm; Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights; and even Thursdays on occasions. Sky weren't joking when they promised "football seven days a week".

But it's easy to blame Rupert Murdoch and his millions for a fixture list as haphazard as Estonia's timekeeping. Surely Sky's only crime was to have offered financial carrots to the Premier and Football Leagues which neither could resist? In the latter's case the deal is worth £125m over five years, money the League calls "the lifeblood of the smaller clubs".

But it comes at a cost. The Charlton manager, Alan Curbishley, thinks the League has been held to ransom by Sky: "That Sky made the Football League kick off on a Friday night says it all to me as to where the power lies. It makes my job harder because if you play on Friday night, you'll watch a game on the Saturday and probably have to assess potential opponents on Sunday too."

Charlton are among those First Division clubs who face a backlog of postponed games due to international involvement. "We forced the issue over international players," Curbishley says, "and we know we can't have our cake and eat it. But you can't ask fans to watch a team without three of its top stars. They're the ones being mucked around."

The club versus country situation takes on a more ludicrous hue in Charlton's case when you consider that their England Under-21 players were released for a game that attracted less than 4,000 fans and forced the postponement of a game that would have drawn around 10,000 to The Valley. But Curbishley is also unhappy about the midweek fixture list which, last Tuesday, saw the Robins having to travel to Tranmere and Manchester City to Southend.

However, organising a fixture list to please everybody all of the time is no easy matter. It involves a lengthy process which begins in October to be ready for the following August. It is a far cry from the 1880s when, with only 12 clubs to consider, a ballot determined which clubs would play at home on the first Saturday – and the clubs worked the rest out themselves. From 1915 to 1967 the League paid a little lawyer called Charles Sutcliffe 150 guineas for a fixture list which took three days to complete and was invariably so foolproof that the first draft seldom needed more than eight changes, a standard even the most modern computer can't better. Sutcliffe's charts resembled a chequerboard of 924 red and white squares, each club being allocated a different number each season. Apparently the only mistake he ever made was once to mix up Sheffield Wednesday with United.

In 1967 the League's secretary, Alan Hardaker, paid £400 for the copyright of Sutcliffe's system, but computers soon rendered it obsolete. However, the same criteria still have to be taken into account today, such as holiday dates like Christmas and new year when no club wants to play away; midweek variations (every club has its own preferences depending on local customs); cash flow (no club can have three or more home games in a row, and none want a derby fixture on the first day of the season, a traditionally lucrative fixture date); local problems (Bury, Stockport, Manchester City and Rochdale all want to avoid clashes with Manchester United, as do both Everton and Tranmere with Liverpool); policing (Scarborough and York are 41 miles apart yet policed by the same force so they can't play at home on the same day); and events outside football like the Grand National, party conferences and the Nottingham Goose Fair which affect teams in Liverpool, Brighton, Blackpool, Bournemouth and Nottingham with regard to the police and transport facilities.

So it's inevitable that occasionally Darlington will have to play Torquay at Christmas and West Ham fans will have to get up at 5am on New Year's Day to catch a coach to Maine Road, as happened last year. But we're not asking for miracles here, just a little restraint. Making the Coca-Cola Cup a one-legged affair might help, but then that is tinkering with football's traditions as much as expanding the fixture list is. Charles Sutcliffe must be turning in his grave.

Olivia Blair is assistant editor of FourFourTwo *magazine*

Wounded Lions go down fighting

Rugby League

DAVE HADFIELD reports from Lancaster Park, Christchurch

New Zealand	32
Great Britain	12

Britain's walking wounded staggered and limped away with all the unwanted luggage of a series of new records as they went down to their third defeat in New Zealand here yesterday.

The tourists started with six men who should not have played and suffered injuries that deprived them of two others. The record books tend to miss that sort of background information – what they will remember is that this was Great Britain's biggest losing margin against the Kiwis and only the second whitewash in a series.

It was also, by any dispassionate measurement, the end of the least successful tour of a major league-playing nation that the Lions have ever endured: they will fly home tomorrow without having won a game in New Zealand.

And yet among this chronicle of disaster, there was much that was brave and admirable in Britain's efforts last night.

Two of their most vital players, Bobbie Goulding and Andy Farrell, could only play after being given painkilling injections. Others, like Stuart Spruce and Kris Radlinski, chose not to have the needle, playing through considerable pain instead, while Alan Hunte and Daryl Powell both turned out despite medical advice against doing so.

"I wouldn't be critical of any of the players and I would be very disappointed if anyone else was," their coach, Phil Larder, said. "I felt that everyone out there gave me 100 per cent and you can't ask for more than that."

Farrell was a typical case of going beyond any reasonable call of duty. "He was told he shouldn't play because of the muscle tear in his side, and it was only Andy appealing to me to let him go out there as captain that saw him play," Larder said. Farrell had to run up and down the touchline 15 minutes before the game to assess whether his injections had worked. Like others who should have been sitting safely in the stands, he shirked nothing, demonstrating a spirit for which this beaten touring party will get all too little credit.

Another brave effort from the Great Britain Academy side could not prevent them also going down to a whitewash in their series against the Junior Kiwis. Trailing by 18 points midway through the second half, the young Lions fought back to lose 37-36. Ian Knott, Gary Broadbent, John Clarke, Paul Anderson, Ian Watson and Nathan McAvoy scored their tries.

Farrell's henchman, Denis Betts, was another who stood out. On the day he equalled Cliff Watson's 25-year-old record as Britain's most capped forward. Betts also achieved the distinction of scoring a try in each match of the series.

His touchdown after three minutes, spotting a gap in the corner from dummy half, briefly made it seem possible that Great Britain could defy medical science, but it was not to be a happy 31st international for Betts, however well he played individually. Within five minutes, the Kiwis had drawn level, John Timu going through some substandard defence for a converted try.

New Zealand dominated from that point onwards, but were held at bay until 12 minutes before half-time, when the match suddenly fell apart for Great Britain, with three quick tries killing off their hopes of salvaging anything from the series.

Stacey Jones and Steve Kearney combined to send in Ruben Wiki to begin the collapse and, when Goulding's attempt to pass to Hunte was intercepted by Gene Ngamu, it was almost all over. Another ill-fated Goulding initiative saw New Zealand again turn defence into attack, Timu picking off the British scrum-half's chip kick and Ngamu releasing Sean Hoppe.

Iestyn Harris's pass sent Adrian Morley charging over to fan a few embers of hope. They glowed fitfully for 10 minutes before New Zealand again showed how dangerous they are direct from the scrum, Jones and Ngamu slicing the British defence apart for Hoppe to claim his second.

Matthew Ridge claimed the final points of the game and series, converting a try which he scored out of nothing, his fourth goal underlining his contribution to this increasingly confident Kiwi side as full-back, captain and kicker. His other role, as wind-up merchant, was responsible for one of the more bizarre endings to any player's Test career.

Powell had already announced that he would be retiring from internationals after this, his 33rd appearance for his country, to concentrate on his new job as player-coach at Keighley. However, he proved unwilling to bow out in a quiet or orthodox manner.

Powell tangled with Ridge, after the Kiwi captain had allegedly "sledged" another British player. The Great Britain centre then appeared to be sent off for what he said to the referee, Steven Clark, but somehow managed to return to the field for the last two minutes. It was later confirmed that Powell had indeed been sent off for "foul and abusive language" rather than merely sin-binned, and he has had to apologise to the international judiciary for his unscheduled reappearance with which he brought down the curtain on a stubborn and durable Test career.

There was something almost symbolic about it. Britain badly beaten but unwilling to accept it gracefully, brought back up to quota by a player who was not even allowed to be there. There was a courage about this defeat that deserves to be remembered despite the statistics of this miserable month in New Zealand.

Denis Betts (white shirt) tries to keep Britain on the move in Christchurch yesterday Photograph: Simon Baker/Empics

NEW ZEALAND: Ridge (Manly); Hoppe (Auckland), Wiki (Canberra), Timu (Canterbury), Ellis (Auckland); Ngamu (Auckland), Jones (Auckland); Young (South Queensland), Iro (Sydney City), Kearney (Auckland), Smith (South Sydney). **Substitutes used:** A Swann (Auckland), Vagana (Auckland), Blackmore (Auckland), L Swann (Auckland).

GREAT BRITAIN: Spruce (Bradford); Hunte (St Helens), Radlinski (Wigan), Powell (Keighley), Mather (Western Reds); Hammond (St Helens), Goulding (St Helens); Broadbent (Sheffield), Cunningham (St Helens), O'Connor (Wigan), Betts (Auckland), Scullthorpe (Workington), Farrell (Wigan). **Substitutes used:** Harris (Workington), Joynt (St Helens), Morley (Leeds), Dwyer (Bradford).

Referee: S Clark (Australia).

Eagles land Larder

Phil Larder had some welcome good news yesterday when he was appointed coach of Sheffield Eagles.

Larder, the former Widnes and Keighley coach, will return from Great Britain's disastrous tour – which he has been in charge of – to succeed Gary Hetherington, the founder of the Eagles who left the club this week to become chief executive of Leeds.

The announcement was made within two hours of Britain's third Test defeat in New Zealand. Speaking from Christchurch, Larder said: "Sheffield Eagles are one of the real success stories of rugby league and I am proud and honoured to accept the position."

Ironically, Larder succeeds his own assistant in the Great Britain camp, Hetherington, who flew home early from the tour to take up his new position at Headingley. Hetherington said: "Phil is a tremendous signing. He has worked at every level and is very ambitious to take a team to the top. He will find the Eagles players very receptive and eager to learn. I wish him every success."

Larder, a former player with Oldham and Whitehaven, was the Rugby League's first director of coaching from 1982 to 1986. He later coached Widnes and Keighley and was assistant to the Great Britain coaches, Maurice Bamford, Malcolm Reilly and Ellery Hanley, before succeeding the latter in time for the 1995 World Cup.

The Sheffield president, Terry Sharman, who has succeeded Hetherington as chief executive, said: "I have known Phil Larder since 1981 and have admired his outstanding record in coaching and team management. His availability at this time represents a golden opportunity for the Eagles."

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

■ You short-brained or what? We go to Eurosport after the match and we check out the replay. If I am right, you'll never be up on the chair again. Is that a deal? **Michael Stich**, German tennis player, disagrees with umpire Richard Kaufman's decision in Stuttgart.

■ When he was in Turkey, Souness didn't know anything about football. If his side can score against United, then we can beat them on Wednesday. **Uygun Bulent**, one of the Fenerbahce players.

■ It's about time to bring it to an end. I don't feel that I'm too big to say I'm sorry. **Joe Frazier**, the former world heavyweight champion who wants to end his long-running feud with Muhammad Ali.

■ Let's forget the comparisons with Pele and recognise Ronaldo for what he is – the best player in his position in the world. Ronaldo is not the past, he is the present. Brazil's coach, **Mario Zagallo**, on naming the Barcelona attacker in his squad for a friendly against Cameroon next month.

■ I desperately wanted to score and to qualify for the World Cup final, but I didn't and Germany went through. **Chris Waddle** responds to criticism of his decision to appear in a pizza advert with Stuart Pearce and Gareth Southgate making fun of their England penalty misses.

SPORTING DIGEST

Gustafsson on march

Tennis

Magnus Gustafsson became the first semi-finalist at the Paris Open yesterday when he put controversy over let calls to one side to beat Marc Rosset, 6-2, 3-6, 6-2.

Rosset and Gustafsson got into prolonged discussions with the chair umpire, Rich Kaufman, over the electronic let detector used to feel the ball clipping the net on service. The device replaced the judge sitting with his finger on the net who was considered to be in danger of being hit by tennis balls coming past at high speed.

Rosset did not think much of the machine. "I think there's a better way than to spend so much money for a machine that does not work," Rosset said. "If you are serving more than 200kph [125mph], and the ball is passing close to the net, maybe the vibration is going to make the thing beep."

The tournament supervisor, Mark Darby, was summoned. "In the second [set] we had some problems and we tried to adjust the sensitivity of the machine. In the third set there were no problems. One thing for sure, it has to touch the net to make a sound," was Darby's contribution to a debate that provided more excitement than the match.

Monica Seles and Jennifer Capriati moved closer to their first meeting since 1992 when they both won in the Ameritech Cup in Chicago yesterday.

Seles, who shares the world No 1 ranking with Steffi Graf, defeated Irina Spirlea 7-6, 6-2, in their quarter-final taking advantage of 33 unforced errors and 12 double-faults by the Romanian. Capriati, ranked 50th and a late entry in Chicago, put out the No 8 seed and defending champion, Magdalena Maleeva, 6-3, 5-7, 6-1 in the second round.

Taylor lets his team down

Snooker

Dennis Taylor failed to prevent Belgium producing a shock victory in the World Cup in Bangkok yesterday and admitted: "I let the boys down."

Taylor lost a 57-minute deciding frame to Bjorn Haneveer as his Ulster trio slipped to a 5-4 Group A defeat. "I'm not pulling my weight," said the 47-year-old former world champion. Taylor has now secured just one of the six frames he has contested in the 20-nation event.

At one stage the Irish threesome led 4-2, with Joel Swail and Terry Murphy making up for their captain's poor form. But a break of 75 enabled Mario to beat Murphy and pull the score back to 4-3, and Delsemme added a run of 58 against Swail and suddenly the match was tied.

Northern Ireland now play the group leaders, the Republic of Ireland, today. In Group B, Canada recorded their second successive 8-1 win to overtake Scotland, who play South Africa this evening. The Canadians defeated Singapore with their only defeat suffered by Alain Robidoux against Bernard Tey.

England slipped 1-0 behind against China when they began their second match in Group C. The world No 5, Nigel Boud, already beaten by Dubai accountant Masood Akil against the United Arab Emirates, lost on a respotted black to Tao Shan.

Langer takes share of lead in Hong Kong

Golf

Bernhard Langer kept up his chances of a confidence-boosting win in the Alfred Dunhill Masters in Hong Kong yesterday with a four-under-par 67 to take a joint share of the lead. Langer, who has now gone 13 months without a victory and failed to win a European Tour event for the first time in 17 years, is one of four leaders at the halfway stage on 133.

The German is joined by New Zealand's Paul Devenport, Taiwan's Hsieh Yu-shu and Park No-seok, of South Korea.

"Every win is nice although victory here will not make up for missing out in Europe this year," Langer said. "But it would certainly be good to win to end the season on a positive note and get my confidence back."

Europe's No 1, Colin Montgomerie, still suffering from the effects of jet-lag, returned his second successive 69 to lie five behind the leaders, while Ernie Els, fresh from winning his third successive World Match Play title, added a 69 to his first-round 71.

Laura Davies was four shots off the lead after the first round of the Toray Japan Queens Cup in Azuma yesterday. Davies, who is chasing her ninth win of the year and her second in Japan, fired a one-under-par 71.

The three-day tournament for a top prize of $112,500 (£75,000) will end the race for the 30 places in the Tour Championship, the season-ending event in Las Vegas from 21-24 November. Karrie Webb, of Australia, tops the list with 847,903pts, followed by Davies with 827,483.

Basketball

New York, Los Angeles and Phoenix were among the eight sites chosen on Wednesday for the inaugural Women's National Basketball Association season due to start next summer. Val Ackerman, the League president, announced Phoenix, Los Angeles (Lakers), Sacramento and Utah will comprise the Western Conference, while New York, Charlotte, Cleveland and Houston make up the Eastern Conference. The two-month schedule will be released in February, as will the team names and logos. The WNBA Draft will occur on 28 April with training camps opening 28 May and the regular season beginning on 21 June. US Women's national team members Rebecca Lobo and Sheryl Swoopes became the first two players to commit to the league last week.

Bobsleigh

The Great Britain Olympic bobsleigh team's lucrative sponsorship deal with Zanussi will continue despite the recent drug case in which Mark Tout was banned for life.

Boxing

Lennox Lewis still does not know the date of his fight against Oliver McCall for the vacant World Boxing Council heavyweight title. The promoter Don King has suggested two alternative dates: 11 January in Nashville, Tennessee, or 8 February in Britain. Lewis has been waiting for a title chance since he stopped Lionel Butler in a WBC final eliminator in Sacramento in May last year.

Cricket

Paul Smith, the all-rounder released at his own request by Warwickshire in August, after 16 seasons at Edgbaston, has signed a one-year contract with Shropshire.

Shahid Nazir, the 21-year-old Pakistan seamer who took 5 for 54 on his Test debut against Zimbabwe two weeks ago, is to join the Northern League side Kendal as their professional in 1997.

Shahid Afridi hit eight fours and four sixes in his 36-ball 66 as Pakistan crushed Zimbabwe by nine wickets in Lahore yesterday to take a 2-0 lead in their three-match limited-overs series. Saeed Anwar made 84 not out.

SECOND ONE-DAY INTERNATIONAL (Lahore): Zimbabwe 195 (49.1 overs; A Flower 51; Saqlain Mushtaq 46-3); Pakistan 196 for 1 (28.4 overs; Saeed Anwar 84no, Shahid Afridi 66). **Pakistan win by nine wickets and take lead 2-0 in series.**

TITAN CUP TRIANGULAR ONE-DAY LIMITED-OVERS SERIES (Guwahati, India): Australia 236 for 6 (50 overs; M Bevan 79, M Slater 53no); South Africa 229 for 2 (45 overs; A Hudson 68, L Klusener 89no). **South Africa win by eight wickets. Series standings:** 1 South Africa (P6, Pts12); 2 India (5-3); 3 Australia (5-1).

SUPERSPORT SERIES (formerly Castle Cup) First day: Cape Town: Western Province 220 (J Commins 81no, H Ackerman 51; R Bryson 4-64); Northern Transvaal 95 for 2. **Durban:** Natal 315 for 5 (D Benkenstein 129no, M Bayers 73, S Pollock 59no) v Border. **Paarl:** Boland 268 (L Ferreira 127; C English 5-65); Griqualand West 7 for 0.

Cycling

Eddy Gragus, of the United States, took the leader's yellow jersey yesterday when he won the 2.1 kilometres (1.3 miles) prologue in the second Tour of China. Gragus, of the US Postal Service, finished the time trial in 3min 8.04sec, 1.5sec ahead of compatriot Andy Bishop of the NutraFig-Colorado team. The cyclists in the 10-day event will finish in Shanghai after covering a total distance of 667.5km (413 miles).

Football

The former Norwich, Nottingham Forest and Notts County striker Justin Fashanu scored on his debut for Miramar Rovers in a 4-2 New Zealand National League win over Melville United less than three days after joining the club.

Whitby Town's FA Cup first-round tie with Hull City will now be played at Scarborough's McCain Stadium on Sunday 17 November.

Ipswich Town's top scorer Alex Mathie is to undergo a shoulder operation which is almost certain to keep him out for the rest of the season.

Wycombe Wanderers' new manager John Gregory has named Richard Hill, the former Oxford United and Northampton midfielder, as his assistant manager. Hill had been Reading's first-team coach.

Arsenal's Coca-Cola Cup third-round replay against Stoke at Highbury on Wednesday 13 November will be televised live by Sky Sports.

ENGLAND UNDER-21 SQUAD (European Under-23 Championship Group Two v Georgia, Batumi, 8 November): Day (Crystal Palace), Marshall (Norwich); Newton (Charlton), Schnecker (Aston Villa), Hall (Coventry), Thatcher (Wimbledon), Duberry (Chelsea), Rufus (Charlton), P Neville (Manchester Utd), Carbon (Derby), Butt (Manchester Utd), Thompson (Liverpool), Holland (Birmingham), Stamp (Middlesbrough), Eadie (Norwich), Dyer (Crystal Palace), Hewlett (Leicester), Scowcroft (Ipswich), Branch (Everton), Humphreys (Sheffield Wednesday), Allen (Tottenham).

TRANSFERS: Jason Kavanagh (defender) Derby to Wycombe (loan); Clayton Blackmore (midfielder) Middlesbrough to Bristol City (loan), Tommi Kautonen (defender) MyPa-47 (Fin) to Ipswich (trial), Niclas Grönholm (forward) MyPa-47 (Fin) to Ipswich (trial); Fredrik Ljungar (defender) HIF Oslo (Nor) to Ipswich (trial), Mark Morris (defender) Bournemouth to Brighton (undisclosed fee); Ole Bjorn Sandgot (midfielder) Molde (Nor) to Bradford City (trial); Jonathan Gould (goalkeeper) Bradford City to Gillingham (loan); Carl Griffiths (forward) Peterborough to Leyton Orient (loan); Matthew Reeb (midfielder) Norwich to Northampton (loan).

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP Fixture changes: Wed 29 Jan: Leicester v Sunderland (from Sat 29 Mar).

NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE Fixture changes: Sat 9 Nov: Postponed: Charlton v Gillingham (international call-up). **Wed 20 Nov:** Charlton v Birmingham (from Tue 19 Nov). **Fri 29 Nov:** Millwall v Brentford (from Sat 30 Nov). **Sat 30 Nov:** Swindon v Reading (from Fri 29 Nov).

THURSDAY'S LATE RESULTS: European Cup-Winners' Cup second round second leg: Liverpool 6 (McManaman 26, Barnes 0, 54, Barnes 65, Fowler 70, 71, Berger 80) Sion 3 (Chassot 19, 64, Bonvin 23) (agg: 8-4). AIK Stockholm 0 Nimes (Fr) 3 (Brunotte og 69) (agg: 3-3). Lokomotiv Moscow 2 (Solomatin 9, Ulitin 56) Benfica 3 (Paneiro 47, Caniedo 63, João Pinto 90) (agg: 2-4). AEK Athens 4 (Sarevski pen 4, Borros 20, Mitsidieris 80, Ergas 83) Olimpia Ljubljana (Slovenia) 0 (agg: 6-0). PSV Eindhoven 2 (Ooijer 19, Zenden 85) Brann Bergen 2 (Hirlund 36, Rio 60) (agg: 3-4). Red Star Belgrade 1 (Jovicic 47) Borussia M 1 (Basinas 45) (agg: 2-4). Paris St-Germain 4 (Leonardo 9, Dely Valdes 22, Loko 58, Ro 75) Galatasaray (Turk) 0 (agg: 6-0). Sparta Prague 1 (Lovenc 5) Fiorentina 1 (Rebizzi 63) (agg: 2-3). **Winstonlead Rest League First Division:** Cameron 3 Thornemead 1. **Pontins League First Division:** Sheffield Utd 1 Preston 4. **Aon Insurance Combination First Division:** Bristol City 3 Swindon 2.

Golf

ALFRED DUNHILL MASTERS (Hong Kong) Leading second-round scores: 133 Hsieh Yu-shu (Tai) 67, 66; Park No-seok (S Kor) 66 67; P Devenport (NZ) 63 70. **134** B Langer (Ger) 66 67. **134** S Leaney (Aus) 70 64; B Rumgay (Thai) 67 67; A Meeks (US) 68 68; S Laycock (Aus) 66 68; G Hamp (US) 65 69; Kang Wook-soon (S Kor) 64 70. **136** C Humphreys (SA) 71 65; W Grist (Aus) 71 65; G Chalmers (Aus) 70 66; J Cooper (Aus) 66 67; S Taylor (US) 67 69. **137** M Davis (Fr) 69 68; T Sieng (Thai) 68 69; D Cole (Aus) 67 70; B Hughes (Aus) 66 71. **Selected: 138** C Montgomerie (GB) 69 69. **140** E Els (SA) 71 69. **141** S Ballesteros (Sp) 71 70.

SARAZEN WORLD OPEN (Braselton, Georgia) Leading first-round scores (US unless stated): 65 T Barnnger. **66** F Nobilo (NZ). **68** G Stacher, F Couples, J Cook, S Hoch, N Price (Zim). **69** P Baker-Hunt (GB); D Chopra (Swe); C Mason (GB); M McNulty (Zim); P Stewart. **70** M Calcavecchia, D Love; L Parsons (Aus); P Harrington (Ir); E Boult (NZ); S Kwan; C Magee. **71** P McGinley (Ir); B Lane (GB); J Nicklaus; J Robson (GB); S Alker (NZ); M McLean (GB); E Romero (Arg); C Williams (GB), P J Cowen. **Others: 72** M A Jimenez (Sp); J Daly; F Zoeller; S Field (GB); E Fryatt (GB). **73** B Crenshaw, M Gronberg (Swe), R Burns (GB); P Curry (GB); P Walton (Ir), M James (GB), S Torrance (GB); R Goosen (SA), A Forsbrand (Swe); A Oldcorn (GB). **74** A Cejka (Ger). **75** M Davis (GB); A Hunter (GB). **76** P Hedblom (Swe); P-U Johansson (Swe); R Wilson (GB), P O'Malley (Aus). **77** J Payne (GB).

Ice hockey

NHL: Boston 4 Hartford 4 (ot); Toronto 5 NY Islanders 3; Philadelphia 4 Tampa Bay 3

Motor racing

Nissan announced yesterday it would develop a new GT car for the Le Mans 24-hour race in France next June. The new car, to be named a Nissan R390 GT1, will be powered by a Nissan-developed 3.5 litre twin-turbo V-8 engine and will be styled like a prototype sports car. Nissan has yet to detail its entries for next year's Le Mans but three of the new cars will participate in the GT1 category of the race. Porsche TWR won the endurance race last year.

Rugby League

Eighteen amateur clubs will compete with professional sides from the First and Second Divisions for the right to take on Super League teams in the 1997 Silk Cut Challenge Cup. A total of 72 amateur teams will set out on the cup trail on 21 December, with First and Second Division clubs entering in the third round on 25 January. The Rugby League have dropped the idea of seeding leading Super League clubs and they will all now enter the competition at the fourth-round stage on 8 February.

Snooker

CASTROL HONDA WORLD CUP (Bangkok): Group A: Belgium bt Northern Ireland 5-4. **Group C:** Canada bt Singapore 8-1; England bt China 5-4 (Eng names first: N Bond lost 1-0 to Tao Shan, R O'Sullivan bt Guo Hua 1-0, P Ebdon bt Pang Wei Guo 1-0, O'Sullivan bt Shan 1-0, Ebdon bt Hua 1-0, Bond lost 1-0 to Wei Guo, Ebdon bt Shan 1-0, Bond lost 1-0 to Hua, O'Sullivan lost 1-0 to Wei Guo). **Group D:** Wales bt Malaysia 6-1 (Rees names first): D Morgan lost 1-0 to S Chang, A Davies bt Ng Ann Seng 1-0, M Williams bt Yong Kem Foot 1-0, Davies bt Chang 1-0, Williams bt Seng 1-0, Morgan bt Foot 1-0, Williams bt Chang 1-0, Morgan bt Seng 1-0, Davies bt Foot 1-0.

Squash

Peter Nicol and Chris Walker have moved to career-best positions of three and four respectively in the new world rankings. Nicol, the 23-year-old from Inverurie near Aberdeen, has reached three semi-finals since September, and the final of the US Open which he lost narrowly to world No 2 Rodney Eyles. The 29-year-old Walker is the highest-ranked Englishman on the list, produced by the Professional Squash Association and still headed by Pakistan's Jansher Khan, as it has been since September 1993.

LEADING PSA WORLD RANKINGS: 1 Jansher Khan (Pak); 2 R Eyles (Aus); 3 P Nicol (Scot), 4 C Walker (Eng); 5 B Martin (Aus), 6 D Harris (Eng), 7 C Rowland (Aus); 8 M Chalmer (Eng), 9 A Hill (Aus); 10 S Parke (Eng).

Tennis

Boris Becker has pulled out of next week's Stockholm Open because of an inflamed tendon in his right ankle.

PARIS OPEN (France) Men's singles, quarter-finals: M Gustafsson (Swe) bt M Rosset (Swit) 6-2 3-6 6-2.

LTA WOMEN'S CHALLENGER (Edinburgh) Singles quarter-finals: D Schuttova (Cz Rep) bt J Pullin (GB) 6-4 6-3; S Smith (GB) bt H Cross (GB) 6-3 4-6 6-0; M Maruska (Aut) bt S Noorlander (Neth) 0-6 6-3 6-4.

AMERITECH CUP (Chicago) Women's singles second round: J Capriati (US) bt M Maleeva (Bul) 6-3 5-7 6-1; L Davenport (US) bt P Suarez (Arg) 7-6 6-0; B Schultz McCarthy (Neth) bt L Wild (US) 7-5 6-7 7-6. **Quarter-finals:** M Seles (US) bt I Spirlea (Rom) 7-6 6-2.

TODAY'S NUMBER

100m

The pesetas (£500,000) that the Catalan Tennis Federation are to spend sponsoring five promising players on condition that they pay back the money if they make the top 100 in the world rankings.

sport

Chivadze puts faith in proud tradition

Georgia play England next Saturday in their first home match in World Cup history. **Hugh Pope** visits Tbilisi and meets the men who could cause a commotion in the Caucasus

Alexander Chivadze (left), the Georgia coach, and his Under-21 coach, Vladimir Gutsayev, in Tbilisi's Boris Paichadze stadium Photograph: Patrick Pope

A lot of things will be happening for the first time when England play their World Cup qualifier against Georgia here in Tbilisi on 9 November. And nobody is more aware of that than the Georgian trainer and local football legend, Alexander Chivadze.

As the day of the big match rapidly approached, Chivadze was still just settling into his first office as the first manager of the first Georgian national football squad, preparing for their first match ever against England.

The sharp-eyed Georgian trainer is a man of few words. He has even fewer illusions about the chances of his team from the five-year-old republic against the world-famous names of English football.

"I don't know who will win. Before the game, both sides have the same chance," Chivadze said. "In football you have only one rule: stop them scoring against you, and getting your side to score."

Georgia looked good in an unlucky 1-0 defeat to Italy in Rome in their first qualifying match last month. Wales have good reason to remember their trip to Georgia two years ago for a *Euro 96* qualifier: they lost 5-0. Players like Georgi Kinkladze at Manchester City have made a name for themselves abroad. And when Chivadze heard that his rival, Glenn Hoddle, was a born-again Christian, he felt on home ground at last.

"He may be Christian, but we have been Christian for longer. Since the fourth century, you know," he said, proudly digging out a big gold crucifix on a necklace from the thick carpet of hair under his shirt.

Georgia may be a young republic, but it is proud of preserving its customs in the Caucasus mountains between Russia, Turkey and Iran. One of those traditions, more recent and little realised in England, perhaps, is that Georgians are surprisingly good at football.

Chivadze should know. He is 41 years old now, but he still has the moustache that marked out his hawk-like face when won 52 caps for the Soviet Union. He captained the side for five years, during which tiny Georgia supplied up to six players to a team that drew its men from all over the Soviet realm.

"They called me the 'General of the Russian Defence' when the Soviet Union beat England 2-0 in Wembley in 1984," Chivadze said. "But until now we have only played as clubs. This is the first time we will be playing against the English national team."

During Soviet times, Georgian national pride had to make do with victories by their premier club, Dynamo Tbilisi, which served as a virtual national team during the Soviet era. In European competition, they beat Liverpool 4-2 on aggregate in 1979 and West Ham, after a fabulous 4-1 win at Upton Park, by the same margin in 1981.

Those days were lovingly recalled by Chivadze's close friend and trainer of the Georgian Under-21 side, Vladimir Gutsayev, a star midfielder and forward for Dynamo Tbilisi, who was also capped 22 times for the Soviet side. "They were good Soviet teams, but we were better," Gutsayev said.

Dynamo Tbilisi can still fill the great stadium in the capital. They showed all sides of their form at a big match in September for the Commonwealth of Independent States – the former Soviet Union – Cup, defeating Torpedo Moscow on aggregate during a home-leg match that showed typically Georgian style.

Flashes of fast-running brilliance left the Russian side standing. The referee's decisions were disputed with shouted displays of a fiery temperament special to the Caucasus mountains. There were also moments of lassitude when it seemed like some players were taking time out from an amateur game – a trait that could pose great dangers when they come up disciplined international sides like England.

Nothing on the well-prepared pitch, however, could compare to the explosive antics of Dynamo Tbilisi's manager. Roaring like a lion, he would charge off his bench to stomp along the sidelines and urge his team on. A polite Uefa official was impatiently brushed aside and ended up looking like an embarrassed dog owner unable to restrain his Great Dane.

The Georgian fans, by contrast, are a remarkably well-behaved lot. Considering the wild reputation of the Caucasus mountains, there is little sound of drunkenness or rowdiness in the large crowds, even after dark in a city that is regularly without electricity.

> Youngsters only have cracked tarmac parts of their bleak housing estates to learn the sport. Sometimes the players do not even have hot water

More poignant are the impromptu brass bands. These are not the marching bands of the European continent, but are more like a jazz group in a jamming session. During the Torpedo Moscow match, one lone Georgian trumpeter kept his team company with a series of melancholy solos.

The stadium itself is showing its age: one section last month entirely lacked seats and consisted only of menacing-looking welded metal pieces jutting out of the concrete. In theory it should only hold some 74,000 people, but Chivadze says it has been known to pack in crowds of 100,000.

Any visitors will find Georgia is a pretty friendly and, in some ways, a familiar place. There is even a British micro-brewery, pub and beer garden in the main street of Tbilisi. Here its 29-year-old British co-proprietor, Nick Carratu, brews up a potent version of a Camra-award winning beer, originally called Blunderbuss but reborn in Georgia as 75p-a-pint, 5.5 per cent Black Panther.

With such a welcome, the only friction with some 300 and 700 English fans expected in Georgia is likely to be the fact that, in addition to their black, red and white national flag, the Georgians sometimes also wave the same white-and-red banner used by England supporters – the flag of St George.

If the stadium is a monument to crumbling Soviet giganticism, the building newly assigned to Chivadze and the Georgian football federation a few hundred yards away is a reminder of Georgia's rich and troubled history. When I visited, the view included teenagers lying drunk on the little patch of grass and pavement in front of the three-story building's crumbling facade.

The house of a grand Georgian merchant in Tsarist times, the Soviet Union turned the building into a school before independent Georgia assigned it to the federation. The stairs are still chipped, the paint is cracked and the fluorescent lightbulbs are bare.

Cardboard is piled up in all the corners as the federation starts to furnish the place for a national organising body and a team that has only been in existence since Chivadze was chosen to form it in 1993.

Up in his wood-panelled room, Chivadze has so far only managed to put in the managers' essentials: a magnetic board to sort out the moves with his players, a huge television screen in the corner to keep an eye on the big matches on Eurosport – and perhaps something even more important for his morale: a grainy black-and-white print that caught a moment back in the 1960s when three Georgian players, all Soviet football heroes, embraced Pele on the pitch in Moscow.

In a living link with a deeper Georgian past, the office heating is from a beautiful but chipped 19th century tiled stove that is on a preservation list kept by the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg.

If the building has seen hard times, so has Georgian football. A pampered sport in the Soviet era, it barely survived as Georgia collapsed in post-Soviet struggles. Civil war broke out in 1991 and raged until 1993. The president, Eduard Shevardnadze, the last foreign minister of the Soviet Union, only managed to drive paramilitary gunmen off the streets of the capital in 1995.

Youngsters only have cracked tarmac parts of their bleak housing estates to learn the sport. Sometimes the players do not even have hot water after their games. Dynamo Tbilisi does not even have a sponsor's name to sew on their shirts. The national squad does not have its own training pitch, and it is only thanks to a gift from Renault that they have a bus for the team.

Hardly surprisingly, Georgia's best players have been snapped up abroad: Shota and Arvil Arveladze by Trabzonspor in Turkey, Temur Ketsbaia by AEK Athens in Greece, and Kinkladze, Mikhail Kavelashvili and soon, perhaps, Kakhi Tskhadadze at Manchester City.

Typically, Chivadze would not be drawn on the problems that his team was likely to encounter against England. The English goalkeeper was obviously highly qualified, he said. The defenders were stable. The midfield was always dangerous. And the English strikers were good. As for Hoddle, Chivadze acknowledged that his opposite number was a very great player.

"He was a technical player, not a usual English player. I am sure his team will play good football. I have to say it is one of the best and strongest teams in Europe," he admitted.

GEORGIA: THE HARD STRUGGLE TO ESCAPE OBSCURITY

Population: 5.6m.
Registered football clubs: 1,238.
Registered football players: 106,427.
Official internationals played: 21 (W9, L12, goals for 24, against 31).
First international played: 0-1 v Slovenia *(Valletta, Malta, friendly, Feb 94)*.
First international win: 1-0 v Malta *(Valletta, friendly, Feb 94)*.
Biggest international win: 5-0 v Wales *(Tbilisi, European Championship, Nov 94)*.
Biggest international defeat: 0-5 v Romania *(Bucharest, friendly, April 96)*.
National stadium: Boris Paichadze stadium, Tbilisi *(capacity 74,924, all seated)*.
Last World Cup match: v Tbilisi: Soviet Union 2, Wales 0 *(1982)*.

● Georgia was the first of the former Soviet republics to break away and form an independent football league. The first national championship was held in 1990. Dynamo Tbilisi won the title that year and have done so every year since. They have also won the Georgian Cup in each of the past five seasons.

● Georgia boasted European football's top league goalscorer last season when Zviad Endeladze, of runners-up Margveti Zestafoni, scored 40 goals in 30 league appearances. Endeladze has not yet been capped by his country.

هكذا من الاصل

Arsenal search for due respect

Guy Hodgson looks ahead to a day of local difficulties in the Premiership

Perhaps because of the media pounding that Manchester United have received in recent days, Arsenal are probably glad of the distinct lack of attention on them even though they are top of the Premiership. The Gunners keep winning and the rest of us remain underwhelmed.

Even in London, Wimbledon's progress to third place has received more plaudits than Arsenal's slightly surprising ascent to the summit. Yet they have five wins from their last six matches, and wouldn't Manchester United love a record like that at the moment?

Today Arsenal meet Wimbledon at Selhurst Park knowing that if they get their third successive away victory they will open a three-point gap at the top, albeit probably only until Liverpool and Newcastle play tomorrow. Conversely if they lose, Wimbledon will take a brief (at least it is assumed it will be brief) tenure.

"They'll be fired up for it," Martin Keown, the Arsenal central defender, said. "But we'll meet the challenge head on. There's enough experience and hunger in our side. That's the key to it."

No one will be more confident than Ian Wright, whose 10 goals in nine games have earned him a recall to the England squad and who will be returning to the stadium where he first shot to prominence with Crystal Palace. "It's a lucky ground for him," Keown said. "It's going to be important for them to shut him out of the match."

Mark Hughes probably regards Old Trafford as a lucky ground as well and the Chelsea striker will be bristling to put one over his erstwhile team-mates at Manchester United. But things have gone so badly for the champions in the last 13 days, a visit from their former player is the least of their worries.

Indeed when the front page of another newspaper boomed out yesterday: "Fergie: I could kill myself" supporters who had watched their team concede 11 goals in two Premiership matches and then lose a 40-year unbeaten home record in Europe probably empathised. The surprise in Manchester was that the headline referred to the Duchess of York and not the United manager, Alex Ferguson.

"The best cure would be a win," he said. "Nothing changes in terms of our players' ability and they have the desire. Chelsea have a good record here so they'll have a bit of confidence and have a go at us which will help."

As Coventry's manager, Ron Atkinson, said this week: "We'd all love Manchester United's problems". One man who would agree is Nottingham Forest's Frank Clark whose team have not won in the League since the opening day of the season. Forest travel to Aston Villa today hoping that the maxim that derbies are great levellers will apply.

At least Clark can welcome back Kevin Campbell, whose 10-match absence with hamstring and ankle problems has coincided with Forest's plummet to third from bottom. Before he was injured he scored four goals in four games; since he has been missing hardly anyone has been able to find the net.

Derby, too, have been shotshy in recent weeks and like Forest are involved in a Midlands derby, against Leicester City, who have reached the dizzy heights of 11th place in the Premiership. Derby, without a win from five league matches, will hope they meet the opponents who were routed by Liverpool rather than the Dr Jekyll side of their character that beat Newcastle 2-0 last week.

Another derby sees West Ham travel to Tottenham, who will be relieved to get back to normal after the emotionally charged match at Chelsea last week in the aftermath of Matthew Harding's death. "I've been a player and a manager for a long time," Gerry Francis, the Tottenham manager, said, "and I've seen a few minute silences, but it was one of the most emotional atmospheres I've ever experienced at a game and it must have been difficult for both teams."

French test lies in wait for Newcastle

NICK HARRIS

Newcastle United will meet the French side, Metz, in the third round of the Uefa Cup, with their manager, Kevin Keegan, confident that his side are well prepared for the challenge. "We respect Metz but we don't fear them," he said. "At the same time we are fully aware that French teams always seem to do well in Europe."

The Metz club president, Carlo Molinari, said: "Newcastle are obviously the most dangerous club we could have drawn. I have no doubt that they are future champions of England and they have great attacking potential."

Metz will be especially worried about David Ginola's return to home territory. Keegan said: "David will be going back to France and he will have the chance to show the French team manager what he is all about now."

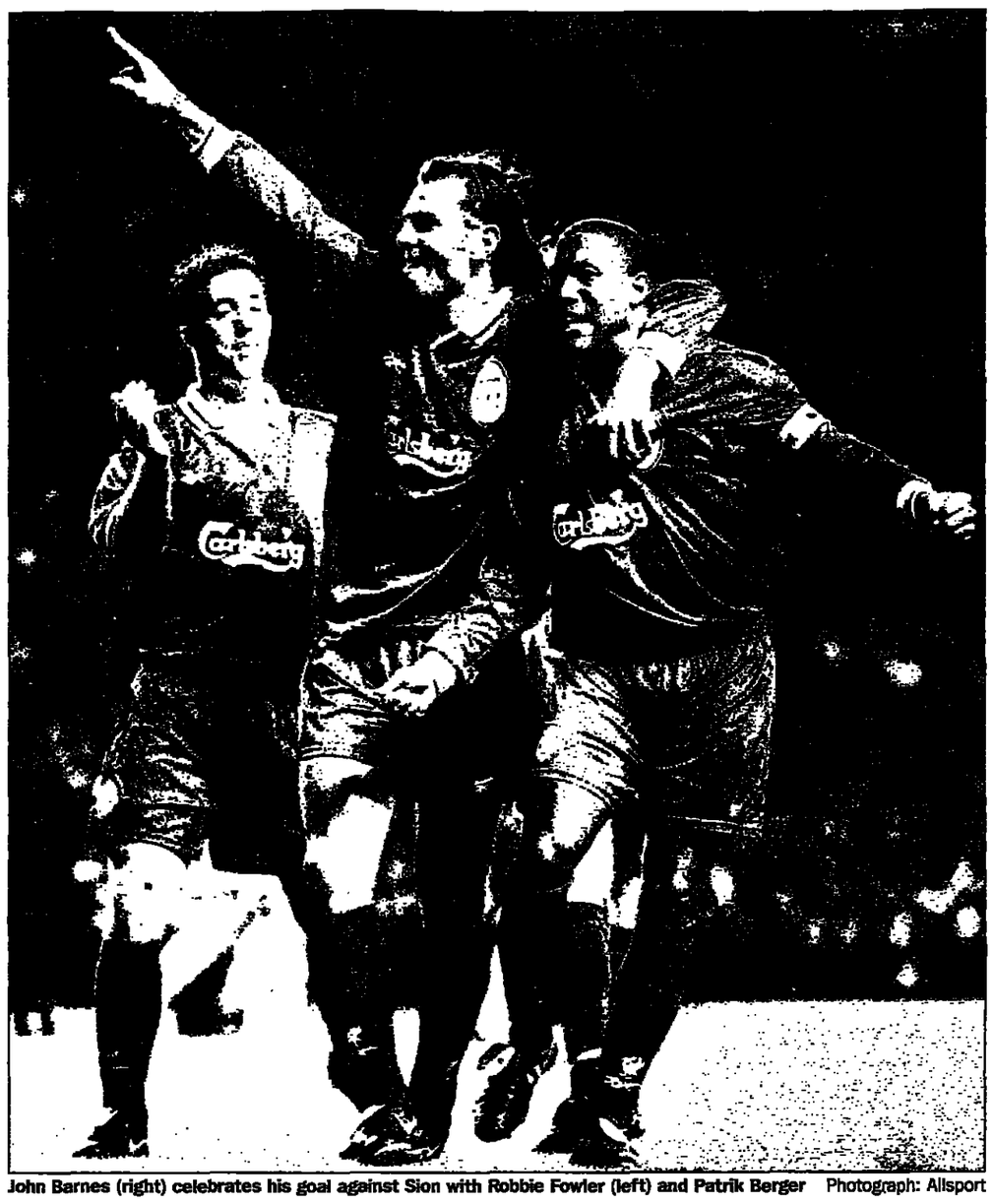
Keegan's team, the only British representatives left in the draw in Geneva yesterday, will face a first leg away in the 27,000 capacity Saint-Symphorien stadium on 19 November. They will definitely be without their £15m striker Alan Shearer, recuperating from last week's groin operation, but Keegan hopes he will recover in time for the second leg at St James' Park on 3 December.

Metz finished fourth in the French League last season, but are in a in mid-table position this season. They have played in the Uefa Cup three times in the past, but they have never progressed as far as the quarter-finals. They advanced to the third round this time by beating Sporting Lisbon 3-2 on aggregate.

Internazionale remain the favourites for the tournament, but their trophy-winning credentials were dented somewhat when they were taken to penalties by the unfancied Austrian side, Casino Graz, on Tuesday. Inter, who had Paul Ince sent off, won 5-3 on spot-kicks. The Italian side, trying for a third Uefa Cup in seven seasons, meet Boavista of Portugal. Unfancied before the tournament, Boavista progressed impressively with a 5-1 aggregate win over Dynamo Tbilisi of Georgia.

The three German clubs to reach the last 16 avoided each other in the next round. Hamburg face arguably the sternest test after being paired with Monaco, Karlsruhe meet Aberdeen's conquerors, Denmark's Brondby, while Schalke 04 will play the Belgians, Club Bruges.

UEFA CUP Third-round draw: Metz (Fr) v Newcastle Utd; Monaco v Hamburg; Brondby (Den) v Karlsruhe (Ger); Tenerife (Sp) v Feyenoord (Neth); Anderlecht (Bel) v Helsingborg (Swe); Club Bruges (Bel) v Schalke 04 (Ger); Internazionale (It) v Boavista (Por); Valencia v Besiktas (Tur). *First leg ties 19 November, second leg 3 December.*



John Barnes (right) celebrates his goal against Sion with Robbie Fowler (left) and Patrik Berger Photograph: Allsport

Liverpool must tighten up

Guy Hodgson on the lessons that must be learned from the Sion show

The Sion coach was encouraging, but unwilling to reach for over-bold predictions. What chance do Liverpool have of winning the European Cup-Winners' Cup? "Good" Alberto Bigon replied. "They are among the top three of four teams in the competition. I do not know how they would do against the others."

His reservations were shared by his Liverpool counterpart, Roy Evans, who was relieved to put a step into his spring by qualifying for the quarter-finals next March but was aghast at the defending of his team. Do not be fooled by the apparent one-sided nature of Thursday's 6-3 win or the 8-4 aggregate, they were mighty close to going out of the competition. Down 2-0 after 22 minutes at Anfield and behind again later on away goals, Liverpool's sloppy marking and tackling put their European ambitions in jeopardy before they exploited a tiring Swiss opposition to score four times in the last half hour.

Even then, if John Barnes had not replied immediately to Frederic Chassot's goal that put Sion 3-2 ahead on the night, who knows what the tension would have done to the home side's limbs?

Certainly, Evans was less than euphoric. He was pleased to have reached the quarter-finals but he added: "You can't defend like that against the top sides in Europe. Taking the whole thing into context, we were lucky to get away with it."

Liverpool's main problem was their right flank, where Jason McAteer's willingness to push forward was not compensated for by an equal eagerness to track back, or by John Scales' covering. Fortunately for Scales and his fellow defenders, their wrongs were rectified by the attack, principally Steve McManaman.

The England winger has an infuriating inclination to mislay the final ball after causing carnage with his dribbling, but on Thursday he was exemplary. Pushed ahead of Patrik Berger when Liverpool went 2-0 down, he bewitched Sion's rearguard, scoring one goal and playing a part in three others.

Coming on top of an outstanding performance in Switzerland, there was little surprise that Bigon singled out McManaman, along with Berger, for praise. "They are the players the others look to. The others play for them and off them."

As to how Evans shores a defence that also looked fragile in the Coca-Cola Cup against Charlton, he has obvious alternatives in Neil Ruddock and Mark Wright. The latter, who is on the mend from a broken cheekbone, is probably more important, because his advice and covering is acknowledged by McAteer as an important factor in his conversion to a wing-back.

Venables decides to reject Rovers

ALAN NIXON

A £500,000 a year salary and a £20m budget to spend on players has failed to persuade Terry Venables take over as the manager of Blackburn Rovers.

The former England coach has decided to stay as the director of football at Portsmouth because of a difference in opinion on his role at Jack Walker's wealthy Rovers. The main stumbling blocks are understood to have been the control of transfer spending and the naming of a backroom team. Both Venables and Walker wanted the major say.

The Rovers owner is keen to have Venables' coaching know-how at the club, but the former Spurs manager would rather be in complete charge.

As the two previous managers, Kenny Dalglish and Ray Harford, found out, the final word on transfers rests with the millionaire Walker and he plans to keep it that way.

Blackburn were prepared to offer Venables a lavish wage and even the chance of a signing-on fee if he would uproot and move north for the first time in his career.

The way is now open for Bruce Rioch to emerge as a leading contender for the Rovers vacancy. The former Arsenal manager, who has support in the Ewood Park dressing-room, is working without a contract as No 2 to Stewart Houston at Queen's Park Rangers.

Grimsby Town, third from bottom of the First Division, have parted company with their manager, Brian Laws. The youth coach, John Cockerill, will be in charge for tomorrow's home game against Sheffield United. Laws was appointed in November 1994 and was allowed to keep his job in the wake of the dressing-room incident which left the Italian striker Ivano Bonetti, now with Tranmere Rovers, with a fractured cheekbone.

Aston Villa have withdrawn Steve Staunton from the Republic of Ireland squad for the World Cup qualifier with Iceland in Dublin on 10 November. The defender has failed to to overcome a hamstring injury which has sidelined him for the last two weeks.

■ Lennart Johansson, the Uefa president, has given his backing to the use of video replays during matches to help decide disputed goals. "When it comes to goals, we could use cameras to avoid making mistakes," he said. "But to stop a match to see if a ball was offside – no."

No 160 Torquay United

FAN'S EYE VIEW

By Nick House

Recently, watching the country's most improved team, I've pondered the issue of attendances. What makes them go down?

Imagine this. A team, playing its 13th game of the season, surpasses the number of victories it achieved the preceding season. The match, at home, is witnessed by a crowd lower than for all but two of the previous season's games. Yet this is the story at Torquay United. The crowd for the recent game against Doncaster was 1,843. Last season, best forgotten, saw 20 crowds of over 2,000.

The knee-jerk reaction highlights increased admission from £6 to £8 (to sit or stand). But last season's prices were the lowest in the League. Justifiably, maybe, given the performances. Prices would have been even lower had the club maintained its promise to charge £4 if the team did badly. This policy perished as Torquay fell with the autumn leaves.

The club's explanation for now charging £8 is novel: the original figure was £7.50 until a fans' forum voted for the extra 50p. J M Keynes, standing in front of me, calculates 3,000 at £6 is more than 2,000 at £8. This isn't a bad theory considering decent Torquay teams normally draw 3,000 crowds. JMK's view – we are dead in the long run – means he is yet to consider next season's prices.

We need to be mindful of the impact of away fans. Grafted on to 2,000 home fans, visitors bringing 50, rather than the last lot's 500, reduces the crowd by 20 per cent. This can hide true trends but not, I feel, in this case. There are definitely fewer of us.

Live television? You've heard it before, but lower division clubs are most susceptible. And while midweek European games barely affect the Premier League and First Division, crowds drop throughout the Third Division.

At Torquay the balance sheet's significance has been greater than the League table for years. The annual £200,000 sale to a big club is good business; but selling four £50,000 players to other Third Division clubs represents lack of ambition.

Torquay is a club associated more with its owner, Mike Bateson, than any player or manager. I have supported and opposed, understood and misunderstood him, offered defence against his detractors and disagreed with his acolytes. After six years I'm that confused I can now only judge him by the team's results. At the moment he is OK.

But there are those who bitterly recall some of last season's events: home terraces given to Plymouth supporters after a solemn promise was broken; MB's contemptuous attitude culminating in a laddish magazine parading an "our supporters are complete dickheads" quote; his award of a new contract to his son-in-law, arguably the least popular player in years.

This dissatisfaction gave rise to the rumour that Stevenage's leading scorer was runner-up in our player of the year award. Most adopt a more charitable attitude now, with the exception of feelings towards a certain player. The Plymouth decision, for example, was hard to swallow but there were safety, and possibly, economic considerations.

Nevertheless, I suspect 1,800 of us can understand why another 500 or so are staying away – but does Mike Bateson? Strangely, had there been a fixed £7 charge throughout last season we'd probably now be playing to crowds of 2,500 or more.

Economics and logic (as applied to football) are, after all, mexican séances. Pricing may not be the only factor but a review would be more than an economic gesture. Whoever said a winning team attracts the fans?

MAJOR WEEKEND FOOTBALL FIXTURES AND POOLS CHECK

TODAY

3.0 unless stated

FA Carling Premiership

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Arsenal	11	7	3	1	22	8	24
Newcastle	11	8	0	3	20	12	24
Liverpool	10	7	2	1	20	8	23
Wimbledon	11	7	1	3	20	11	22
Man Utd	11	5	4	2	22	17	19
Chelsea	11	5	4	2	19	16	19
Aston Villa	11	4	3	4	13	11	15
Everton	10	4	3	3	11	11	15
Sheff Wed	11	3	3	5	12	16	12
Tottenham	11	4	2	5	11	11	14
West Ham	11	3	2	6	11	15	11
Leicester	11	3	2	6	9	13	11
Middlesbrough	11	3	2	6	16	18	11
Sunderland	11	3	4	4	9	11	13
Southampton	11	3	3	5	20	16	12
Derby	11	2	5	4	10	14	11
Leeds	11	3	1	7	8	18	10
Nottm Forest	11	1	5	5	10	18	8
Coventry	11	1	5	5	4	14	8
Blackburn	11	0	4	7	7	16	4

1 Aston Villa v Nottingham Forest
2 Derby v Leicester
3 Leeds v Sunderland
4 Manchester Utd v Chelsea
5 Sheffield Wed v Southampton
6 Tottenham v West Ham
7 Wimbledon v Arsenal

Nationwide League First Division

8 Bolton v Huddersfield
9 Bradford City v Oldham
10 Norwich v Charlton
11 Oxford Utd v Ipswich
12 Port Vale v Birmingham
13 Portsmouth v West Bromwich
14 QPR v Stoke
15 Southend v Reading
16 Swindon v Manchester City
17 Tranmere v Crystal Palace
18 Wolves v Barnsley

Second Division

19 Bournemouth v Bury
20 Bristol Rovers v Gillingham
21 Crewe v Wycombe
22 Millwall v Walsall
23 Notts County v Shrewsbury
24 Peterborough v Blackpool
25 Plymouth v Luton
26 Preston v Rotherham
27 Stockport v Bristol City
28 Watford v Brentford
29 Wrexham v Chesterfield
30 York v Burnley

Third Division

31 Carlisle v Wigan
32 Colchester v Cardiff
– Darlington v Scarborough
33 Doncaster v Chester
34 Fulham v Lincoln
35 Hartlepool v Brighton
36 Hereford v Barnet
37 Hull v Cambridge Utd
38 Leyton Orient v Torquay
39 Mansfield v Scunthorpe
– Rochdale v Exeter
– Swansea v Northampton

Bell's Scottish League Premier Division

40 Celtic v Aberdeen
41 Hearts v Dunfermline
42 Motherwell v Dundee Utd
43 Rarth v Rangers

First Division

44 Clydebank v Falkirk
45 Dundee v St Mirren
46 Greenock Morton v Airdrie
47 St Johnstone v East Fife * Off
48 Stirling v Partick

* Postponed Pools panel will adjudicate.

Second Division

49 Berwick v Hamilton
– Clyde v Ayr
– Livingston v Dumbarton
– Stenhousemuir v Queen of South

Third Division

– Albion v Arbroath
– Cowdenbeath v Alloa
– East Stirling v Inverness CT
– Montrose v Queen's Park
– Ross County v Forfar

TOMORROW

FA Carling Premiership

Blackburn v Liverpool (3.0)
Newcastle v Middlesbrough (4.0)

Nationwide League First Division

Grimsby v Sheffield United (1.0)

Scottish League Challenge Cup final

Stranraer v St Johnstone (3.0)
(at Broadwood stadium, Cumbernauld)

● Other football fixtures: Page 28

TEAM SHEET

Aston Villa v N Forest

Last season: 1-1.
Last five League matches: Aston Villa DLLWL; Nottingham Forest LDLDL.
Bosnich is out for a month with a knee injury, so Oakes returns in goal for Villa, Southgate (ankle) and Nelson (hamstring) face fitness tests, while Staunton is out. Forest hope Pearce (back) will return.

Derby v Leicester

Last season: 0-1.
Last five League matches: Derby DLLDL; Leicester WWLLW.
Yates is likely to replace the suspended Stimac in Derby's defence. Leicester striker Claridge is doubtful with an ankle injury, defender Walsh is suspended, goalkeeper Keller is on international duty with the United States.

Leeds v Sunderland

Last season: did not play.
Last five League matches: Leeds LLWLL; Sunderland WLDLW.
Bowyer may return for Leeds after a nine-game absence but Deane (tonsilitis) and Jobson (leg injury) are doubtful. For Sunderland, Quinn (knee) and Agnew (ankle) are out, Scott (groin) is doubtful. Ord is suspended.

Man Utd v Chelsea

Last season: 1-1.
Last five League matches: Manchester Utd DWWLL; Chelsea LDWLW.
Solskjaer is likely to return for United in place of Cruyff or Poborsky. Leboeuf, Johnsen or Duberry will step in for Chelsea's long-term absentee Lee (broken leg). Vialli (calf) is doubtful, Phelan (thigh) is out.

Sheff Wed v Southampton

Last season: 2-2.
Last five League matches: Sheffield Wed DLLDD; Southampton LWDWW.
Humphreys is likely to replace Hirst in the home attack. Stefanovic and Collins are out. Southampton welcome back Monkou after a five-match absence with a calf injury.

Tottenham v West Ham

Last season: 0-1.
Last five League matches: Tottenham LLWWL; West Ham WLLWW.
Fox (thigh) is doubtful for Spurs but Rosenthal has recovered from a hamstring strain. West Ham strikers Futre and Raducioiu are out, while defender Bowen is doubtful with a groin injury.

Wimbledon v Arsenal

Last season: 0-3.
Last five League matches: Wimbledon WWWWD; Arsenal WWWDW.
Wimbledon are still without McAllister in defence. Arsenal expect Wright to recover from a groin strain, full-backs Dixon and Winterburn are also on the mend after knee injuries.

tomorrow...

Blackburn v Liverpool

Last season: 2-3.
Last five League matches: Blackburn DDLDL; Liverpool WWWLW.
Hendry may return for Rovers just four weeks – a fortnight ahead of schedule – after a groin operation. Sutton, who has missed two games, and Gallacher are also available. Liverpool, chasing a seventh win in eight League games, are expected to reshuffle their defence after letting in three goals against Sion on Thursday.

Newcastle v Middlesbro

Last season: 1-0.
Last five League matches: Newcastle WWWWL; Middlesbrough LLDLD.
Except for their long-term absentees, Shearer and Howey, Newcastle have a full squad available. Beardsley is due to make his 700th League appearance. Middlesbrough's captain, Pearson, is doubtful after suffering concussion against Wimbledon last week – Whyte is on standby.

Bradford turn to Scandinavian trio

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE

The Norwegian international Ole Bjorn Sundgot, who partnered Manchester United's Ole Gunnar Solskjaer at Molde, and Swedish duo Robert Stiener, a striker from Norrkoping, and Magnus Pehrsson, a midfielder from Djurgaardens, go straight into the reckoning for Bradford City's bottom of the First Division meeting with Oldham at Valley Parade today.

City slid to 23rd after losing 4-0 at home to Crystal Palace on Tuesday and will find themselves bottom if Oldham follow their 3-0 midweek win at Grimsby with another victory.

Bolton – three points ahead of Norwich at the top – have doubts over striker Nathan Blake (ankle) and Gudni Bergsson (thigh) for the visit of Huddersfield, who give a second start to Simon Davies, on loan from Manchester United.

Norwich entertain fourth-bottom Charlton while third-placed Crystal Palace visit Tranmere. Swindon, in 10th, play Manchester City, who could come up against their former player Steve McMahon, now player-manager of the Wiltshire club.

The Second Division leaders, Brentford, now only a point clear after they slumped 2-1 at Bristol Rovers and nearest rivals Millwall beat Blackpool by the same score in midweek, visit Watford, while Walsall visit The Den. And in the Third Division Fulham will seek a 13th victory in 17 games at the expense of Lincoln at Craven Cottage, while second-placed Cambridge go to Hull.

The country's bottom club, Brighton, are banning supporters from buying tickets for the main stand at the Goldstone Ground in a bid to deal with mounting crowd unrest. The restrictions will come into force for the visit of Mansfield next Saturday.

Stark return for Gascoigne

SCOTTISH FOOTBALL

After a week when, despite not playing against Ajax in the Champions' League, Paul Gascoigne has remained the focus of media attention, the England midfielder returns to the Rangers line-up today in the humble surroundings of Stark's Park, Kirkcaldy, writes Rupert Metcalf.

Gascoigne will play against Raith Rovers after his midweek suspension as Walter Smith, the Rangers manager, also welcomes back Richard Gough, Alex Cleland and Craig Moore. Brian Laudrup is doubtful, however, with both flu and a groin strain.

Smith has dismissed as "pure speculation" media reports that Kenny Dalglish is considering an offer to join Rangers as the head of their scouting network, and that his left-back, David Robertson, is about to move to Middlesbrough.

Celtic entertain Aberdeen in front of a 50,000 sell-out crowd at Parkhead. Tommy Burns, the Celtic manager, has an injury crisis to cope with. Pierre van Hooijdonk, Andreas Thom, Paul McStay, Phil O'Donnell, Jorge Cadete, Stuart Gray and Marc Anthony are all out, so Chris Hay, 22, and John Paul McBride, 17, may taste first-team action. The English defender Alan Stubbs will captain Celtic for the first time.

Stranraer will play in the final of a major tournament for the first time in their 126-year history when they face St Johnstone tomorrow at Clyde's Broadwood Stadium to decide the destiny of the Scottish League Challenge Cup.

'I'm ready now to become a manager, but I'll only take up the right job for me'
Chris Waddle talks to Ian Stafford in Monday's 28-page sports section

FOOTBALL: FA gives England coach full backing for decision made 'from the heart' while controversial Arsenal pair are recalled

Hoddle takes Gascoigne under his wing

No one can say Glenn Hoddle shirks a challenge. As if attempting to guide England to their first World Cup success on foreign fields were not enough, he yesterday took responsibility for what many would say was an even more daunting task – reforming Paul Gascoigne.

The England coach included Gascoigne in his squad to play Georgia in Tbilisi next Saturday despite widespread calls for him to be omitted after allegations that he had battered his wife, Sheryl. The subsequent reaction – those protests were renewed – overshadowed the recall of two men with chequered pasts themselves, Tony Adams and Ian Wright, who replace the injured Gary Pallister and Alan Shearer.

Picking Gascoigne was, said Hoddle, a decision made by his heart rather than his head but he believed the 29-year-old was capable of change. In an impressive display at a packed West London press conference the 39-year-old argued that the decision, taken after extensive talks with Gascoigne, was consistent with, not contrary to, his Christian beliefs.

In an earlier statement the Football Association made it clear that Gascoigne's inclusion was Hoddle's decision and that they supported it.

It is, as Hoddle said, the tougher of the two choices. "The easy one," Hoddle said, "would have been to cast him out. People talk about making an example of him and that would have been the quick example. This is the chance to make an example of him in the long term. What a great example to youngsters it would be if he can change, like Paul Merson has, off the back of some of the mistakes he has made.

"If we can make him into a role model, that is more positive than casting him out. I honestly believe he is capable of change. This has come from the heart – my head, without knowing the details, told me 'no, cast him out'. I now know the details, I've seen the reaction from Paul, and I'm saying 'yes'."

Hoddle also made an implied criticism, though not necessarily an intended one, of both his predecessor with England, Terry Venables, and Gascoigne's manager at Rangers, Walter Smith.

"I have always felt he needed help. If I had bought him for Chelsea two years ago [when he joined Rangers] these things might have been discussed then, but they weren't. I don't condone for one minute what Paul has done, but I want to give him an opportunity, that is why I have stepped in and made it a personal thing. I made mistakes when I was a kid, others have. Paul Merson has. Paul [Merson] is a good example. He is not over his problem yet but he is well down the road. I do not think he would be in such a good state of mind if the FA had flung him out. There is a lesson there.

"I am sure he and Tony Adams [another recovering alcoholic and former convicted drunk-driver] will have a chat to Paul [Gascoigne] in Georgia. Sometimes life is about learning from your mistakes. Paul now has the chance to do that.

"If Joe Public had done the same as Paul, and there was no police involved, he would not have got the sack."

Hoddle has made the right decision. Where others might have indulged or dismissed Gascoigne rather than face the problem, Hoddle is happy with the pastoral side of his job. Many years of thinking deeply about his own beliefs have left him better equipped to discuss such matters than most managers.

Hoddle refused to admit this was Gascoigne's "last chance" but it probably is. If he abuses Hoddle's tolerance this time his international career will probably be over. As it is, he may not play next week. Georgia will be tough opposition in their own, newly independent, country. They are packed with good technical players and England will not be able to afford to waste possession the way Gascoigne has been doing. A midfield trio of Paul Ince, David Batty and David Beckham looks more solid.

Ahead of them Shearer's place is likely to go to Robbie Fowler rather than Wright, but it is still a remarkable recall for the Arsenal striker. Now 32, he has not been involved with England since February 1995 and won the last of his 16 caps two years ago. He has rarely played well for England but neither has he been given a decent run.

"I can't comment on how he was handled in the past but he is back to his very best," Hoddle said. "It is not about age. If he maintains his form he could still be about come the World Cup."

Wright can also help Gascoigne reform. Though perpetually in trouble with the FA he no longer has problems off the pitch. Yet he once went to jail himself and, while it was only five days for the non-payment of fines, the shock was enough to make him reform his lifestyle.

Hoddle reconciled his decision on Gascoigne to his beliefs by adding: "One of the pivotal principles Jesus spoke about was forgiveness. I don't condone what Paul has done but he can change. A few people have – Saul was one of them."

For those not *au fait* with their Bible this refers not to Frank Saul, the former QPR striker, but to Saul, the persecutor of the early Christians who saw the light on the road to Damascus and became Saint Paul.

Tbilisi is not quite en route to Damascus but at least Gascoigne will be accompanied by three wise men – Keith Wiseman, the chairman of the FA, international committee member Jack Wiseman, and Hoddle himself.

ENGLAND SQUAD

Seaman (Arsenal), **Walker** (Tottenham), **James** (Liverpool); **G Neville** (Manchester Utd), **Pearce** (Nottingham Forest), **Hinchcliffe** (Everton), **Southgate** (Aston Villa), **Adams** (Arsenal), **Campbell** (Tottenham), **Matteo** (Liverpool), **Ince** (Inter-nazionale), **Gascoigne** (Rangers), **Beckham** (Manchester Utd), **McManaman** (Liverpool), **Platt** (Arsenal), **Batty** (Newcastle), **Le Tissier** (Southampton), **Barmby** (Everton), **Ferdinand** (Newcastle), **Sheringham** (Tottenham), **Fowler** (Liverpool), **I Wright** (Arsenal), **Merson** (Arsenal).

Paul Gascoigne (below) learns of his England selection by Glenn Hoddle (above), announcing his squad yesterday

Photographs: Action Images/Reuter

HODDLE'S STATEMENT

Over the past fortnight, it's widely known I've been assessing the problems of Paul Gascoigne and his family.

Paul and myself have met three times during that period and spoken in depth.

In addition, Paul has attended counselling on several occasions. I was with him on one occasion. Sometimes the meetings lasted as long as five hours. Paul and I have also spent long periods talking on the phone.

I believe I now have a clear understanding of the problems he and his family are experiencing, and that he has sometimes taken with him on to the pitch. Much of what I have learnt has to remain private. I am aware of much that is not – and should not – be public knowledge.

My first concern two weeks ago was for Paul and his family. I have been deeply impressed by his determination to address his problems and the progress that he has already made. I believe that with my help and that of counselling, we can guide and help both him and his family to go further. I will certainly do everything I can for them.

My assessment is that Paul should be in my squad for the Georgia game on merit.

At no time have I – or would I – condone what Paul has done. I expect high standards. I also accept that people are human. When they have a problem, each case has to be assessed on its merits. In this case Paul and his family need immediate help and support. Paul knows he has to change in the long term. My aim is to do nothing in the short term that might turn out to be unhelpful in the future.

What I'm announcing today is my decision. I'm grateful for the support of the FA chairman and chief executive with whom I've consulted regularly in recent days.

Everyone's ambition now is to get the result we want in Georgia.

FA'S STATEMENT

The England coach, Glenn Hoddle, has fully considered all the circumstances surrounding Paul Gascoigne's problems in consultation with the FA chairman, Keith Wiseman, and the chief executive, Graham Kelly.

Glenn's decision, totally endorsed by us, is that Paul should be included in the England squad for next week's visit to Georgia.

Glenn has rejected the easy option. He personally believes he can guide, and – with counselling – help Paul Gascoigne and his family with their current deep-rooted problems. Crucially, he believes he must waste no time in doing so.

The Football Association, as is our responsibility, has considered the interests of the game as a whole. We have some knowledge of private and personal matters that relate to the situation of Paul Gascoigne and his family. Clearly we cannot discuss them. But again we too have chosen not to take the easy option.

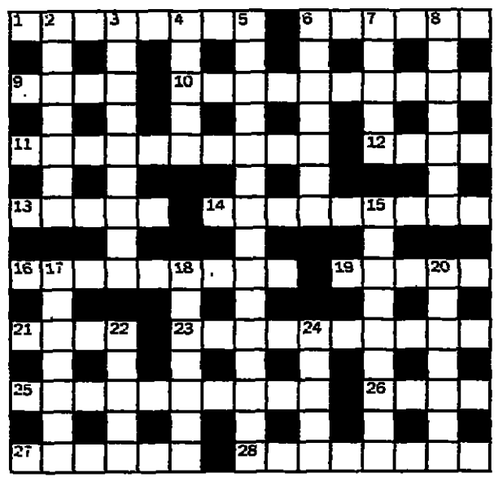
The chairman and the chief executive have been convinced that Glenn's judgement is absolutely the right one given the facts he has been made aware of.

We don't condone unacceptable personal behaviour. We condemn it. We expect high standards. We also have to accept that people are human, and that when problems arise, each must be assessed on its merits.

We are fortunate to have at the top of our game many excellent role models. Their standards are those we expect all our players to aspire to.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3134. Saturday 2 November — By Mass



ACROSS

1 Digs for coins (8)
6 One staying in new hotel in Flint? (6)
9 Drink? One's added to depression (4)
10 Declining award, trendy, cast in silver (10)
11 Neckwear's in good nick after first of washes (4-6)
12 Demolition work around Italy (4)
13 There's point in State backing for informer (5)
14 Uproars evoking complaints (9)
16 Casts around eddying river's young plants (9)
19 Patent settled on time (5)
21 Toss old round coin (4)
23 Maybe only Spain captivates English islander (10)
25 His job's on the line (10)
26 A journey, endlessly boring (4)
27 Ascetic soul, but not cold (6)
28 Values properties (8)

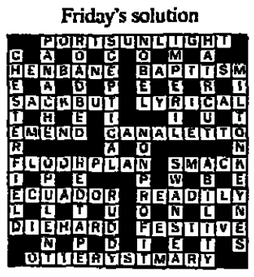
DOWN

2 Perfect university head, a Scot (7)
3 Bumper conservative element? (9)
4 Moderator's inspiration (5)
5 Soloist at the Proms? (9,6)
6 Spain's old region included course grass (7)
7 Actor's lost lead in film (5)
8 Bit of Morocco leather – mock, so they say (7)
15 Ruin's preserved, shored up, with gallery (9)
17 Clot, spot of mud, in sullied blouse (7)
18 The fancy's beat after one mile (7)
20 He practically sees everything (7)
22 Fired, male's resilient (5)
24 New chests? Those that squeak? (5)

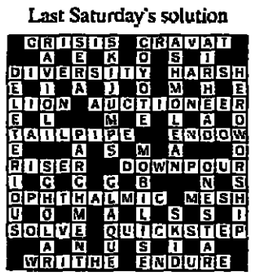
The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the new edition of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P. O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: Bernard Rogers, Marlow; M Avery, Church Stretton; M Wood, Bromborough; C Ventham, Gillingham; M Goldfinch, Bath.

22 down in yesterday's puzzle should have read Friend, taking top off after run, is flushed (5) Our apologies for this mistake.

Friday's solution



Last Saturday's solution



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Saturday 2 November 1996 Registered as a newspaper with the Post Office

Gooch interested in job as chairman

Cricket

NICK HARRIS

Graham Gooch emerged as the favourite to be the next chairman of the England selectors yesterday after the other likely candidate, David Graveney, withdrew.

Confirming that he was interested in taking up the position in succession to Ray Illingworth, the 43-year-old former England captain said: "I am contracted to play for Essex next season, but I would have to give the matter serious thought if I was approached to be England's chairman."

Gooch's apparent willingness to give up his long and highly successful playing career indicates the seriousness with which he is considering the potential appointment. "I don't think it is possible to be both a player and serve as chairman," he added.

Graveney made it clear yesterday that he would not be in the running for the position after learning that the Professional Cricketers' Association, of which he is secretary, would not support his candidature.

"I sensed there was not 100 per cent support for me running as chairman, so I'm stepping aside," he said. "My first loyalty is to the PCA – I fully respect their decision."

The role of chairman of selectors is a seen as a full-time job by the authorities and was described as a 'high profile, high-pressure' post by a working committee of the Test and County Cricket Board this summer, when they drew up recommendations about how it should operate.

The position will be filled next March when an appointment is made by the England Management Advisory Committee. This committee will be made up of six senior members of the English Cricket Board, which replaces the TCCB as the English game's ruling body on 1 January.

The TCCB's media relations officer, Richard Little, admitted that Gooch would be one of the candidates to succeed Illingworth when the committee announce their decision.

"I am certain that Graham Gooch will be in the running for the chairman of selectors' post," he said. "But then I'm sure certain other people will be in contention as well.

"Six wise men will decide who the job is going to be offered to. It's down to them to decide who they want for the post and then to approach them and offer them the job."

No other name but Gooch is being mentioned at the moment.

England A struggle, page 26

هكذا من الاصل

Harvesting grapes at Lamberhurst Vineyard in Kent on Wednesday. Photograph taken by David Rose on a Nikon FM2, 24mm lens, Fuji 200 film

thelongweekend

THE INDEPENDENT • SATURDAY 2 NOVEMBER 1996

Exhausted by the nation's moral panic? Impoverished by the rise in interest rates? Barely survived the witchly threats of Hallowe'en? Unprepared for a sparkling bonfire night? Just lie back in safety and read our tales of the testing pleasures of the Congo and the nigh-orgasmic delights of a trip up the Niger. Or if you are of a more home-and-hearth type, imbibe a beguiling account of a walk in Gloucestershire – no injections required. Or else just unsheathe that combat knife and peel yourself a grape.

Rex

Whatever happened to The Sinclair C5?

The moment: On 10 January 1985, the Formula 1 bathtub was born. The love child of entrepreneur and technical genius Sir Clive Sinclair, the C5 made its first tentative journey in London traffic under the critical eye of a cynical press. The C5 was a confused and dangerous hybrid of a small car and a bicycle. Described as the most expensive tricycle ever, it was lightweight with a single seat and was powered by both battery and pedalling. This meant that it was invisible to lorry drivers, while the driver choked on the exhaust fumes of less environmentally-friendly vehicles as it weaved in and out of the traffic.

The background: Clive Sinclair was a renowned inventor before he tried to turn himself into a motor-industry mogul. His lasting fundamental contribution to technological progress was the pocket calculator. At under £60 it was a masterpiece of miniaturisation, and made his personal fortune. He also brought us the home computer at an affordable price: in the late 70s and early 80s, when a computer consisted of a room of spinning magnetic tape, this was simply an absurd idea. The ZX Spectrum changed all that. We have Sir Clive to thank for all those hours spent playing Pacman and Space Invaders.

The effect: The C5 pleased no one. On launch day, the AA condemned it as a "hazard to the occupant and other road users". One motoring critic said it had "severe limitations", another that it was a "fun-machine that can hardly be regarded as serious, everyday, all-weather transport". As problems arose, partial solutions were invented. A "High-vis Mast" appeared, which made the resemblance to a radio-controlled toy even more striking. It was the last thing a lorry driver would see before crashing into you. A seat booster tried to lift the driver above the exhaust pipes, and side-panels were added to keep the nether regions dry on the long uphill pedals.

Moments of subsequence: Despite his best efforts, Sir Clive was unable to salvage the C5. Within months of the launch, production had stopped, and the company went into receivership before the end of the year. The transformation from respected inventor to the ridiculed creator of a national joke was instantaneous. Sir Clive's contributions to technological progress were glossed over, and ever since he has been remembered as the man who invented the reclining bed on wheels.

He tried again nearly a decade later to create a revolutionary battery-powered form of transport – the Zike. History repeated itself, and memories of the failed C5 lingered in the public's mind. It was launched in August 1992, and by May 1993 the manufacturers had already announced they were stopping production. But now the C5 is back in fashion as a collector's item. Last week, Maurice Levensohn announced that he had sold nearly 7,000 of the trikes – at up to £700 each – that he bought after the venture collapsed in 1985. Many of these have gone to Holland, where they are at home on the flat cycle paths. You can get back on your Zike now, Sir Clive.

Sam Coates

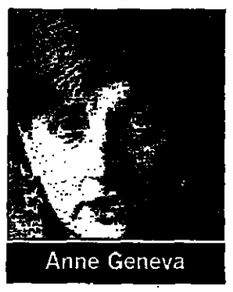
heavenly are Blair's planets sweet?

November 5th will once more see The Guy burned in effigy, despite recent attempts at his rehabilitation by Antonia Fraser. It will also be Election Day in the United States, as it is on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November every four years. With Clinton's 20-point lead in the polls, Hillary will not be conjuring the spirit of Eleanor Roosevelt to divine the winner.

As to our general election, I can't see what all the fuss is about. Astrologers could replace pollsters altogether, if only they had better spin doctors. Since most pundits now consider May Day the most likely election date, any astrocomputer worth its salt should be able to predict the result: all one needs to do is look at the position in the sky of the planetary messenger Mercury for 2 May to see who gets good news and who bad on the morning after.

Interestingly, that date does throw up some intriguing results, astrally speaking, if *Who's Who* is correct about the candidates' birthdays. Looking at his planets generally, Blair's stable (if driven and somewhat weird) planetary array shows not a hint of Satanic influence, despite Saatchi's best efforts. And with the Tory leader's Saturn hitting his Mars, Blair probably finds Major something of a wet blanket – even in addition to the obvious reasons.

On 1 May the planet Jupiter – the Great Benefic



Anne Geneva

– kisses Blair's moon, which should bring him all kinds of luck – especially for high political office, one of Jupiter's fields of command. Since Blair's birthday falls on 6 May, it is his time of year anyway. As for newsy little Mercury, it is sitting in the first degree of Taurus on 2 May.

This brings only semi-good news for Major, as far as I can see, with his own Mercury sitting 30 degrees away; perhaps his margin of defeat will be less than polls are predicting. But the planet of communication will be only five degrees off Blair's Mercury, which lies in a late degree of the preceding sign Aries. The good news for Labour is that since Mercury is retrograde at this time, it is actually moving backwards towards their leader's planet. So Blair could be the man of the moment – but only after some delay.

Long ago, Plato identified the phenomenon of retrograde motion – a Planet overtaking the earth's orbit gives the appearance of moving backwards in the sky – as the problem which astronomers needed to solve. Soothsayers always found it highly significant as well. For our purposes, a retrograde Mercury on Election Day threatens to overturn results or confound expectations.

This may sound good for Major, but it is more likely to enhance the possibility of a hung Parliament. And since Ashdown's Mercury was retrograde when he was born, he seems to fit in best with this manifestation, and may just get to sway the balance. The moon on his sun at midnight of Election Day could see a big change in his status, and Jupiter near his Venus could make him everyone's sweetheart. There may not be anything to astrology, but John Major might be well advised to consider calling the election for another day – just in case.

earthly why should I join the chain gang?

This morning I thought it was funny, but that was then. Nestled on the mat in the rainy light, midst gas and Access bills, was a white envelope. On the front, my name and address on an anonymous, printed label. Inside, a sheet of white photocopier paper. And on it a curse.

"WITH LOVE ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE," said the block capitals at the top, then, "This letter has been sent to you for good luck. The original is in New England. It has been around the world nine times ... You will receive luck within four days, providing you sent it out".

The usual guff. I am always amused by chain letters: they represent the essence of human gullibility: excellent business for the Federation of World Post Offices. I love the fact that they have all been round the world nine times, no more, no less. This letter mentions an incident in 1953. If I were to follow its instructions, and send out 20 copies, 81.92 billion people would receive it in time for Christmas.

The block capitals resumed at the bottom. "DO NOT IGNORE THIS. FOR SOME STRANGE REASON IT WORKS." I skimmed back. Promises, promises. An RAF officer received $70,000, a man received £40,000 and lost it when he broke the chain. Another won $2m on the lottery after his secretary sent out copies. Don't really see why the person who did the work shouldn't have got the money, but there you go.

I once responded to a chain letter: the Chain of

Serena Mackesy

Gold. It promised that, if I sent a quid to the person at the top of the list and added my wishes to the bottom, I would receive at least £40,000. The recipient of my £1 wanted to "use it to spread love in the world". No 2 wanted to "experience other cultures", No 3 to "save my children from starving". Oh, please: in Leeds, love? I scrawled my own wish: "I want more shoes than Imelda Marcos". I'm still waiting.

This letter continued with warnings. Carl Deddin lost his job when he forgot. A woman in California broke the chain, was plagued with car repair bills and won a new one when she resumed it. Then there was Gene Welch in the Philippines. He, and I quote, "lost his wife after receiving the letter which failed to circulate. However, before her death he had received $7,773,000". It doesn't say if Gene was upset about his wife. He could have bought several more with that sort of dough in the Philippines, anyway.

There was something in the tone of this letter, though, that I found ominous. Too many threats, and promises of earthly gifts, for the New Agey sentiments at the top. Then a name caught my eye. Samuel Anthos de Group: purportedly the Venezuelan missionary who started the thing. I wondered if the Pope knew anything about it.

Then I looked again. Having spent a chunk of my career in crosswords, I know an anagram when I see one. I got out the Scrabble letters. Words spread under my fingertips. Death plagues sunroom. The proud souls manage. Glad men pat our houses. Then, once I got PAGE, it was easy, if horripilant: THE PAGE DAMNS OUR SOUL.

Great. Goosebump city. Thanks, friend, whoever you are. Remind me to send you a bag of chicken innards. So I'm damned if I do, damned if I don't. Ay, Papa, isn't it time you got your church in order?

in addition

There are some people who write to this newspaper whenever we mention any number that is divisible by 42. There are some journalists who insert multiples of 42 into their writings just to keep the fortytwophiles on the hook. This week, however, there has been another numerical coincidence. One day, John Major and Gillian Shepherd were at sixes and sevens over the merits of giving school miscreants six of the best, and the next day Kenneth Clarke increased the bank rate. And what did he increase it to? Six per cent!

This week also, Trevor Mitchell set a world record for the number of haircuts given in an hour. Was it six? Well, no, it was 18, but six was the number of people the barber Robert Hardie shaved in one minute in 1909. Yes, six has undoubtedly been the number of the week.

Six is, after all, a perfect number. Euclid knew it was perfect, because it is equal to the sum of the integers that divide it exactly: 1, 2 and 3. And St Augustine wrote that "six is a number perfect in itself". For, he explained, "God created all things in six days because this number is perfect. And it would remain so even if the work of six days did not exist."

Six is, after all, the number of:

sides on a snowflake;

deaths caused by the Great Fire of London;

bottles in a rehoboam;

months spent by the average American waiting for red traffic lights to change;

pints capacity of the average ten-gallon hat;

geese-a-laying;

feet in a fathom;

characters in search of an author;

pips in the BBC time signal;

impossible things Lewis Carroll's Red Queen sometimes believed before breakfast;

and recorded accidents in the home in the UK in 1994 involving a bidet.

Six is also the ratio of the earth's gravity to that of the moon.

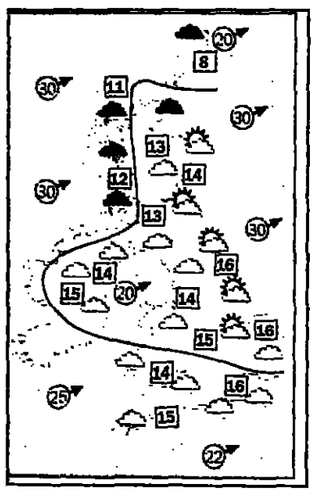
And just think: if old Rehoboam, son of Solomon and king of Judah, had not, in the 10th century BC, presided over a split in the Jewish nation into Israel and Judah, middle-eastern history might have been different and we might not have had the Six Day War in 1967.

And if any diehard fortytwoists are still unconvinced, just take the word "six", add the numerical values of its letters, 19+9+24 to get 52, add 5+2 to get 7, multiply by the number you started with: 6 x 7 = 42. Uncanny.

William Hartston

weekend weather

The British Isles



General Situation and Five-Day Outlook

A deep depression just to the north of Scotland will move away to the north-east, but only as a developing low comes in from the west.

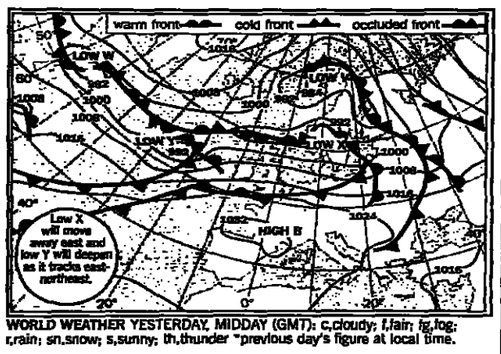
Today, eastern Scotland will get some sunshine, but also a scattering of showers. The rest of Scotland and the islands are going to get some rain, and it will be windy everywhere. Northern Ireland will be cloudy with rain to come, and it will be windy. The northern half of England and Wales will get some bright weather with just a scattering of showers. To the south, it will be cloudier with showery rain, and there will be a gusty southwest wind everywhere.

Sunday will be another windy day with showers, especially in the north and west, although the wind is going to ease later. Wet and windy weather is then going to sweep across the country on Monday with sleet or snow likely over the Scottish hills. Tuesday will then see cold north-west winds and showers, with snow for many northern hills. Wet and windy weather should return on Wednesday with some heavy rain, but north-west winds are expected to be back by Thursday with a mix of sunshine and showers.

Aberdeen	c	8	46	Cardiff	dr	13	55	Ipswich	s	12	54
Anglesey	c	13	55	Carlisle	dr	11	52	Isles of Scilly	c	13	55
Ayr	c	12	54	Dover	s	13	55	Jersey	sh	13	55
Belfast	c	13	55	Dublin	f	14	57	Liverpool	c	15	59
Birmingham	c	14	57	Edinburgh	c	13	55	Lizard	m	13	55
Blackpool	c	12	54	Exeter	c	13	55	London	s	15	59
Bournemouth	c	16	61	Glasgow	c	12	54	Manchester	f	13	55
Brighton	c	15	59	Guernsey	c	14	57	Newcastle	c	11	52
Bristol	c	16	61	Inverness	c	11	52	Nottingham	f	13	55

Oxford	c	14	57	Florence	s	17	63	Melbourne	f	23	73
Plymouth	c	13	55	Frankfurt	dr	14	57	Moscow	m	3	37
Ronaldsway	c	14	57	Funchal	f	22	72	Munich	r	11	52
Scarborough	f	14	57	Geneva	c	13	55	Nairobi	f	28	82
Southampton	c	14	57	Gibraltar	s	19	66	Naples	c	20	68
Southend	s	14	57	Harare	s	23	73	Oslo	s	6	43
Stornoway	r	13	55	Helsinki	r	4	39	Paris	c	15	59
Tiree	dr	13	55	Hong Kong	f	31	88	Peking	c	14	7
York	c	12	54	Islamabad	s	26	79	Perth	f	20	68
				Istanbul	s	15	59	Prague	sh	11	52
				Jerusalem	f	21	70	Rome	f	18	64
				Karachi	s	28	82	Singapore	f	32	90
				Las Palmas	s	25	77	Stockholm	r	8	46
				Luxembourg	c	12	54	Sydney	c	18	64
				Madrid	s	19	66	Tenerife	s	25	77
				Majorca	s	20	68	Tokyo	r	16	61
				Malta	f	14	57	Tunis	f	20	68
				Manila	c	29	84	Venice	f	15	59
				Mecca	s	33	91	Warsaw	c	10	50

Europe and The World



WORLD WEATHER YESTERDAY, MIDDAY (GMT): c,cloudy; f,fair; fg,fog; r,rain; sn,snow; s,sunny; th,thunder *previous day's figure at local time.

Amsterdam	c	12	54	Florence	s	17	63	Melbourne	f	23	73
Athens	f	18	64	Frankfurt	dr	14	57	Moscow	m	3	37
Auckland	f	16	61	Funchal	f	22	72	Munich	r	11	52
Bahrain	s	24	75	Geneva	c	13	55	Nairobi	f	28	82
Bangkok	s	24	75	Gibraltar	s	19	66	Naples	c	20	68
Barcelona	s	18	64	Harare	s	23	73	Oslo	s	6	43
Beirut	f	19	66	Helsinki	r	4	39	Paris	c	15	59
Belgrade	f	13	55	Hong Kong	f	31	88	Peking	c	14	7
Berlin	c	12	54	Islamabad	s	26	79	Perth	f	20	68
Brisbane	f	23	73	Istanbul	s	15	59	Prague	sh	11	52
Brussels	f	12	54	Jerusalem	f	21	70	Rome	f	18	64
Bucharest	f	12	54	Karachi	s	28	82	Singapore	f	32	90
Cape Town	s	21	70	Las Palmas	s	25	77	Stockholm	r	8	46
Christchurch	c	11	52	Luxembourg	c	12	54	Sydney	c	18	64
Cologne	c	13	55	Madrid	s	19	66	Tenerife	s	25	77
Copenhagen	f	11	52	Majorca	s	20	68	Tokyo	r	16	61
Corfu	s	19	66	Malta	f	14	57	Tunis	f	20	68
Dakar	s	34	93	Manila	c	29	84	Venice	f	15	59
Darwin	s	33	91	Mecca	s	33	91	Warsaw	c	10	50

AA Roadwatch

A406 Greater London. Between Henlys Corner (A1/A598) and Finchley (A1000 High Road), carriageway reduced to just one lane between the A1 Falloden Way and Finchley.

M5 Gloucestershire. Between J 17 (Bristol West) (A4018/B4055 Cribbs Causeway) and J 20 Clevedon (B3133), roadworks, contraflow, 50mph speed limit in both directions across the Avonmouth bridge. Expect rush hour delays.

M4 Monmouthshire. Between J 23A Magor (B4245 Magor services) and J 24 Newport (East) lane closed and 50 mph speed limt for major widening work. Expect delays, especially at rush hour.

Out and about with AA Roadwatch call **0336 401** for the latest local and national traffic news. Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 39p per min (cheap rate) 49p per min (all other times) inc VAT.

Air Quality

Yesterday's Readings

	NO_2	SO_2
London	Good	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
C England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

Outlook for Today

London	Good	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
C England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

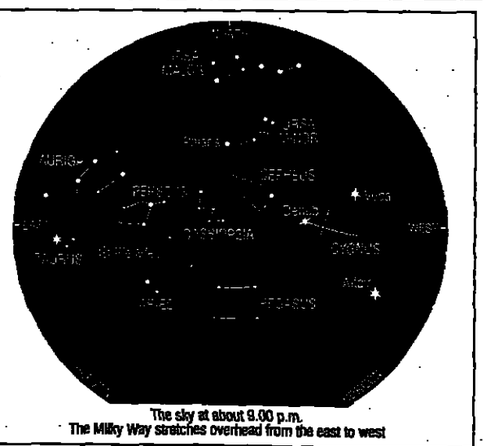
Lighting-up Times

London	4:31pm	to	6:53am
Bristol	4:41pm	to	7:08am
Birmingham	4:36pm	to	7:08am
Manchester	4:34pm	to	7:12am
Newcastle	4:27pm	to	7:15am
Glasgow	4:34pm	to	7:28am
Belfast	4:45pm	to	7:31am
Tomorrow			
London	4:29pm	to	6:59am
Bristol	4:39pm	to	7:09am
Birmingham	4:34pm	to	7:10am
Manchester	4:32pm	to	7:14am
Newcastle	4:25pm	to	7:17am
Glasgow	4:32pm	to	7:30am
Belfast	4:43pm	to	7:33am

High Tides

	AM	HT	PM	HT
London	5.20	6.5	17.53	6.3
Liverpool	2.55	7.9	15.15	7.8
Avonmouth	10.45	10.8	23.07	10.2
Hull (Albert Dock)	10.15	6.2	22.10	6.1
Greenock	4.28	3.3	16.35	3.4
Dun Laoghaire	3.45	3.6	16.08	3.5

The Sky at Night



The sky at about 9.00 p.m.
The Milky Way stretches overhead from the east to west

The waning crescent of the Moon rises long after nightfall – about 10.30pm tonight, and not until well after 3.0am by the end of the week. Take advantage of the dark, moonless evenings to look for the Milky way arching across the sky from east to west. Its hazy glow is the combined light of some of the 100 billion stars that make up our own Galaxy.

If it were not for the great white clouds of dust between the stars, the Milky Way would look very much brighter. The dust is so dense in places, the Milky Way seems to be broken up by dark lanes and patches where the starlight is completely obscured. Scanning along the Milky Way with binoculars, you are likely to be rewarded with the sight of some

Sun and Moon

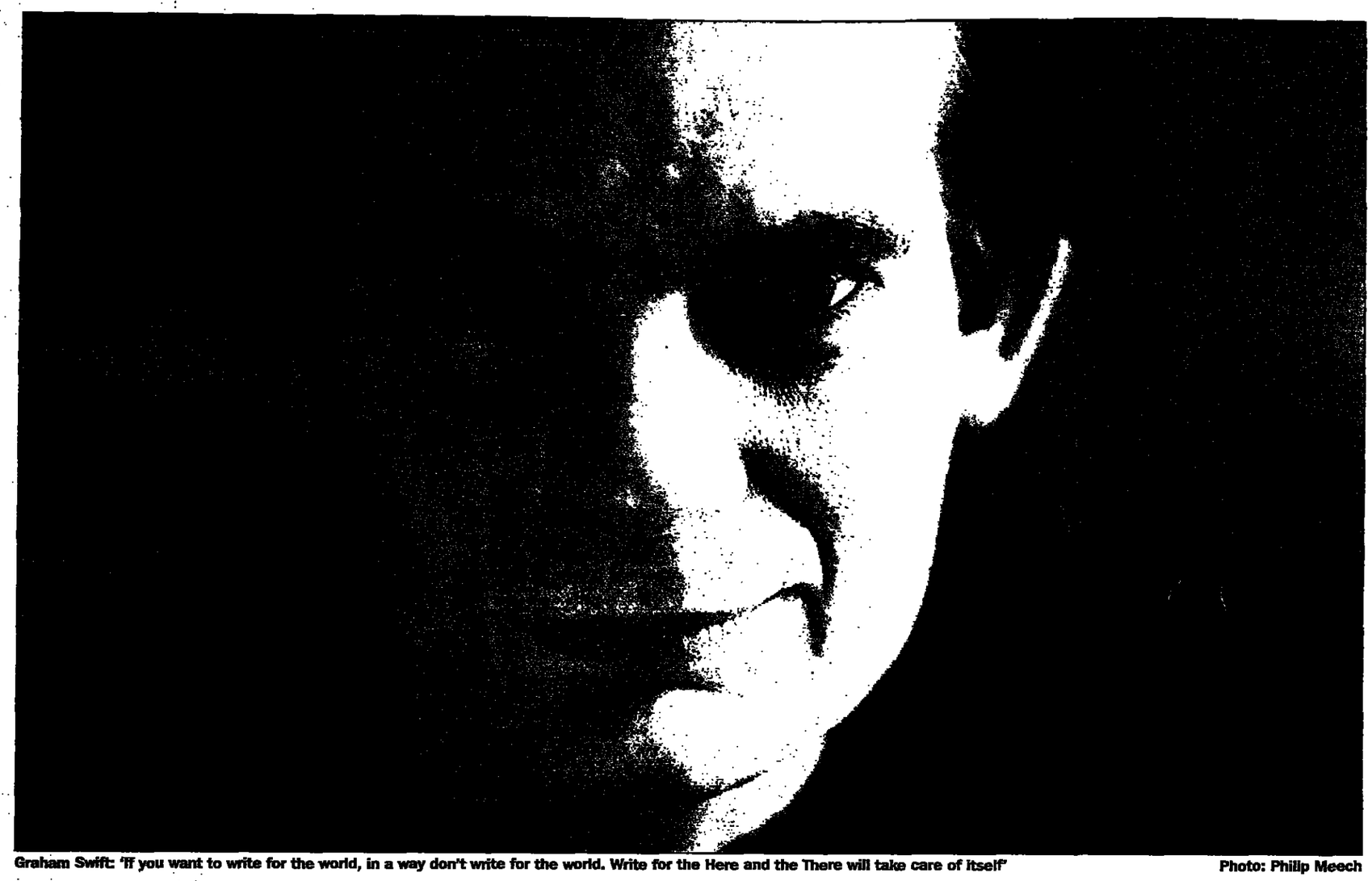
Sun rises 6:56am
Sun sets 4:31pm
Moon rises10:26pm
Moon sets12:44pm

New Moon: Nov 11

هكذا من الاصل

Swift, eventually

John Walsh meets... Graham Swift



Graham Swift: 'If you want to write for the world, in a way don't write for the world. Write for the Here and the There will take care of itself' Photo: Philip Meech

On Tuesday evening, Graham Swift, accompanied by his long-term partner Candice Rodd, dined on herb-crusted lamb cutlets and raspberry délice at London's ancient Guildhall, talked to several friends in the publishing and literary-journalism demi-monde, had several drinks, went to a party at the fashionable Soho House around midnight, had a nightcap or two, and returned home to their house in Wandsworth to find 37 messages on their answering machine, and the floor of Swift's study thickly carpeted with spewed-out fax paper. They got to bed at 3.30am. Graham was back on his feet at 6 am, to be taken by car to the BBC's radio headquarters, Broadcasting House, to be grilled by the hard-hitting John Humphrys, about whom he considered to be the world's leading writers. His voice croakily issuing from his boots, Swift was reluctant to reply. "I don't want to name names right now," he told the *Today* inquisitor. "And *why*," snapped Humphrys, "are you *not* prepared to name the world's leading writers?" "Because I have a huge hangover," declared the eloquent new holder of the Booker Prize.

Such are the overnight traumas you have to expect when you win the nation's top fiction award: fame, £20,000 in your current account, projected sales of 100,000 in hardback, international publicity tour, media saturation and a blizzard of questions from idiot interviewers ("Are you related to Jonathan?"). Swift will, you can be sure, walk through it all with his habitual *sangfroid* and raised-eyebrow politeness, conscious of what a narrow squeak he had 13 years ago, when his third novel, *Waterland*, was shortlisted but lost out to JM Coetzee's *Life and Times of Michael K*.

"It was a wonderful time, 1983," he remembers. "Not only was *Waterland* published, but there was the Best of Young British [novelists – Swift was one of the 20] promotion, and the Booker nomination. It was *great*. But I was quite glad I didn't win, because the whole thing might have knocked me topsy-turvy. Now I think I can handle all that winning the Booker Prize might entail, better than I could have then." He considered his glass of Moët et Chandon. "I just can't tell you how thrilled I am to have won."

A lot of Moët and associated liquids have disappeared down the Swiftian oesophagus today and, by 4pm in the ruinously expensive Mimmo d'Ischia restaurant, hard by his publishers' headquarters in Victoria, he is looking a little tuckered out – as if a little snooze *right here* on the tablecloth might not be a bad idea. But he is a game bird, Mr Swift, loyal to his quaffing partners as he is unfailingly courteous to interviewers, punctilious about appointments with obscure radio shows and generous to his readers – whom he publicly thanked in his acceptance speech at the Guildhall.

"It's one of the ironies of the writer's trade," he said, "that the very people we depend on most we seldom get to see, let alone meet, and yet we expect from them a remarkable intimacy, that they curl up with us and even take us to bed... Novels are not meant for such grand and public occasions as this: they are meant for that intimate, silent, invisible but potentially magical point of contact between the reader and the page."

Surely, I suggested, this was a ludicrously romantic view of readers, who tend to be (if I'm anything to go by) lazy, idle, grunting, feckless, easily distracted people who pick up books and put them down with dizzy abandon, fall asleep over them and sometimes don't finish them... Swift regarded me with heavy patience, like the schoolmaster he once was. "I'm talking about *real* readers, the ones who read my books from start to finish." Where did his readers write to him from? "All over the world. The first foreign translation of *Last Orders* is out already, and it's in Norwegian. The most recent rights agreement was yesterday and it was from Brazil, therefore a translation into Portuguese. I can see trouble ahead for translators, but it hasn't stopped publishers wanting to translate it. Fifteen, last count."

Trouble, indeed. What will the Norsemen make of the Booker-winning tale of a pilgrimage made by four ageing Cockneys from their native Bermondsey to Margate Pier, to scatter into the sea the ashes of their old friend Jack Dodds? How will the novel-readers of Rio cope with the low-key working-class sarcasm, the tidal wave of beer consumed by the protagonists, the allusions to "Billy Hill" the bookies, and the miniutiae of London's war? Swift's novel is a deeply skilful multi-voiced meditation on life, luck, betrayal and redemption, an unclassifiable masterpiece in a minor key. But wasn't it a little too Londonish to travel meaningfully?

"Yes of course, it's a very local book," Swift said. "But I have a very strong faith that the key to the universal *is* the local. If you want your book to travel, don't write a kind of avowedly global, universal, cosmopolitan, *Esperanto* book. Write something local and if you write well, the universal will take care of itself." His large dark eyes gleamed, their pupils massive with the pleasure of success. "All experience is local, governed by place and local conditions. We all understand that. And if some local allusions escape you in a novel set in, say, Chicago, *it doesn't matter*, it adds to the texture of experience. So if you want to write for the world, in a way *don't* write for the world. Write for the Here and the There will take care of itself."

Swift grew up in the same south London backyard as Vince, Vic, Lenny and Ray, the voices of *Last Orders*. ("I've variously said to people who've asked me that it was Catford, Forest Hill, Sydenham or Lewisham, but it's all just south-east London to me. I simply do not know the definition of my birthplace.") There were wide-boy secondhand car dealers like Vince and wise old master butchers like Jack Dodds on his doorstep. Choosing to give them a voice, however, involved Swift in a technical minefield. "If you set a book in Glasgow or Newcastle, you use the local patois or dialect. London is tricky, because it's the metropolis and there are all kinds of preconceptions about London. And the ordinary street language of south London has all these comedic associations – with music hall, 'the Lambeth Walk'... It's automatically stagey. None the less, it is the way English is spoken there..."

Some of Swift's critics (including Germaine Greer on Booker night) felt short-changed that he hadn't made more of London slang, hadn't written in more of a picturesque idiolect. Instead of dropping aitches, however, or adopting the excruciating phonetics beloved of Shaw and O' Casey ("Aow, bloimey, Sargint..."), Swift adopts the simple expedient of allowing his Cockneys to say "aint", and letting this one linguistic detail stand for the whole non-standard chorus in the back of Vince's Merc. "Yes, I was selective with the words I decided to use. If I'd written "ave' and ' 'aven't' over and over again, it would've looked terribly off-putting on the page." Had he got any reaction from south Londoners? "Someone who loved the book wrote to me and said, 'You were wrong to have someone say "ain't it?" ' The correct word is "Ennit?" ' " He smiled. "I wrote back and said, 'It all depends on how you read it, and how you hear it in your ear. Dunnit?' "

'I never felt very grateful to my school, I didn't want to be what they wanted to make me'

One correspondence between the novel and Swift's own life is the jar of Jack Dodds's ashes that gets passed around the four travellers, gets forgotten, remembered, fought over, put into plastic bags and endlessly shifted about until it acquires the status of a character. Swift's father died four years ago, and was likewise cremated, "but it's not about his death," says the son patiently. "He wasn't a butcher..." He was, in fact, a civil servant, who worked at the Dickensianly-titled National Debt Office, took the 8.15am train to the City every morning ("though not in a bowler hat exactly") and returned at 6pm. "He did that most of his life except in the war, and most of the time he hated it. But he was of that generation, so alien to ours, of 'Get yourself a steady job, stick to it, draw your pension.' And he did. He retired very early. He enjoyed a pensionable existence for some time before... before he left."

"Enjoyed a pensionable existence" is a very Swiftian thing to say. Due to either a bureaucratic gene in his system or a legacy of the classroom, he often falls into a magisterial, periphrastic mode which he then subverts with a large grin. Thus, when you ask what his brother does, Swift will say, "He works in the... pharmaceutical industry" (grin) leading you to conclude, wrongly, that his brother's a drug dealer. When the boys were still small, the family moved to the outskirts of the metropolis, to Croydon: "I remember the road wasn't tarmac'd, and you could go round the corner and there were fields, which were gradually built over. We were on the edge of London in a very graphic way – you went one way, it was the town, you went the other way, it was country."

He went to Dulwich College, the public school once attended (1900 and 1901) by Raymond Chandler and PG Wodehouse. Despite numerous invitations to address his *alma mater*, Swift has never been back. Had he had a bad experience there? "I never quite knew what they expected or wanted from me, never sure what claims they had on me. I'm not the Head Boy type." But hadn't the school fired him to write? "Oh, I had a couple of very good English teachers, but I never felt deeply grateful to the school. I didn't want to be what they *wanted* to make me. I didn't do the standard career and become a doctor or a lawyer. I did an individual thing. I was fighting a corner."

Swift took to the Sixties like a wasp to a picnic. He went up to Cambridge to read English at the end of the Summer of Love. "I was a university student from 1967 to 1973," he says proudly, "and if you can think of a better span of years in which to be a student..." One looks at his clean-cut features and the up-all-night shock of startled hair, and tries to imagine him as a graminiverous hippie. "I was in my prime in the Sixties," he says. "Purple loons, tank tops, experimenting with, ah, substances – I did all the standard things, bumming around the world, although I never made it to Katmandu or Samarkand. I had the most awful beard with a horrible patch on one cheek."

So the south London boy, with the *rus in urbe* home, the war-hero-turned-commuter father and the attitude problem about school, became a writer fixated by memory, landscape, death, failed sons and distant fathers, and the undercurrent of confusion that threatens the tidiest areas of human life. *The Sweet Shop Owner* presented a dying widower waiting for his daughter to return to him. *Shuttlecock* featured a son investigating his father's secret life in a Kafkaesque government office. *Waterland* took the fens of East Anglia and from them extracted great long wriggling eels of stories that amounted to a history of England over the last 300 years, told by a failed and desperate schoolteacher. *Out of This World* concerned a photo-journalist and his neurotic daughter. *Ever After* fielded another widower who attempts to commit suicide, like his father before him. Now *Last Orders* takes another blackly comic look at death-in-the-midst-of-life. But attempting to talk about Swift's career elicits a spectacular riff about the downside of creativity: "My ambition, my desire to be a writer, began in my early teens. I had a long period of struggle when I hadn't been published, hadn't even seen my name in print, when I wrote stuff and chucked it away, and I wrote stuff and kept it but wouldn't show it to anyone, and I wrote stuff and *did* show it to someone else and they said, 'We don't want it', and I wrote stuff and showed it to other people and they said we *do* want it, and one day I was writing a novel and got it published. But we're taking about a major fraction of my life here. Before *Waterland* was published I'd been writing for 15 years."

When *Last Orders* was published in January, a huge collective sigh of relief could be heard from Swift fans. It was generally held that *Out of This World* and *Ever After*, while superior fictions, lacked the narrative spark, the style and most of all the energy of *Waterland*. He seemed, to some, to have peaked early and couldn't get back up the mountain. How did he deal with it? "Well, I know remarks of that nature were bandied about in certain quarters," Swift said, in his best Home Office manner, "but I didn't pay much attention to them. The problem was that *Waterland* made such an impression, was such a success, that – as with any success – people want it to be followed up immediately and to the same formula. But I think you should try and do something different every time. Oddly, both the novels that followed it got tremendous receptions abroad. *Ever After* won a major prize in France." He took a reflective sip (we'd moved on to grappa) and, emboldened, said: "I have every faith that, in time, every one of my books will get the recognition it deserves."

Swift's main pleasure, apart from writing exceptional novels and winning major prizes, is fishing. He is a keen coarse and salmon angler, "more enthusiastic than proficient", with a typically romantic-antiquarian slant on his local river in London. You could live a lifetime in Wandsworth and not notice the River Wandle, except for a battered old sign announcing its presence to the unheeding traffic that roars up West Hill, SW18. But to Swift, "It flows down from Carshalton into the Thames at Wandsworth, and it was once a magic river, a lovely trout stream. John Donne fished in it. Nelson fished in the Wandle at Merton, when he had only one arm to fish with. Would that it were such a stream now." Instead, he goes to north Devon, "to a particular part of the river which is so *paradisaic*, I've no intention of revealing it to anyone." His favourites are sea trout, about which he gets very lyrical: "They're related to trout but they head for the sea, then run back up the river like salmon. You fish for them, classically, in high summer, on a warm, muggy evening in July. You go out about half an hour before dusk and, as darkness descends, the sea trout will, if you're lucky, suddenly come up, acrobatically, and take a fly. They'll do it for maybe 20 minutes or half an hour, and if you're there to see them – and to feel an otter swim between your legs – you're very lucky..."

And there let us leave this picture of perfect happiness – the country's *numero uno* novelist, the extravagantly nice master of English voices and eternal sentiments, sitting in the debris of celebration, reflecting on bliss.

arts & books

The music biz in Senegal is being stirred. Youssou N'Dour has sparked a race to build modern studios and bring in Western ways. Local cassette barons are fighting back. By Philip Sweeney

Shakin' the tree

When Peter Gabriel took up with Youssou N'Dour 10 years ago, the Englishman became, it is now clear, much more than a purely artistic influence on the young Senegalese singing star. Years of visiting Gabriel's rambling Real World complex in Wiltshire, with its recording studios, record labels, management offices, Womad concert promotion agency, and buzz, have clearly sunk in. As his own career has blossomed, Youssou has acquired the means to build his own empire, and tales of his two nightclubs, recording studios, and now a new record label, Jololi, emerge regularly from Dakar. Did he have a show-business role model? I asked Youssou in London last month, as he talked of his desire to help young Senegalese artistes and professionalise the African record industry. "Of course – Peter Gabriel," he replied.

Real Senegalese World, it transpires, retains a distinct West African style. Take the relatives. N'Dour siblings appear to occupy all key positions. Brother N'Diada is engineer at the Studio Xipii, the modest downtown recording facility Youssou acquired from the son of Senegal's former President Leopold Senghor. Senghor Jr departed Dakar for destinations unknown after leaving the studio an unused and expensive white elephant, half to be impounded by the unpaid landlord and half taken over by Youssou. Youssou's sister, N'Goni N'Dour, manages both the studio and a new cassette duplication factory. Another younger sister, Aby N'Dour, was one of the first artistes Youssou recorded.

And here I am in a new green BMW, proceeding erratically through the Dakar traffic jams in the hands of Boubacar N'Dour, another brother, and supremo of the new Jololi label for the past 18 months. Boubacar lived in New York for some years, acquiring his excellent English and dabbling in "merchandising Youssou goods" and he still hasn't fully re-acclimatised, getting lost from time to time as we drive. Boubacar wears glasses and a little woolly Spike Lee hat and keeps apologising in a proud sort of way for his ruthless NY business style, although he actually seems rather sweet.

He's also rather vague, an N'Dour family characteristic, as anyone who has vainly pumped Youssou "I am not a business man, I am an artist" N'Dour for specific details of his numerous projects will attest. "Youssou's very prudent," Boubacar says. "He doesn't like to let people know his strategy until he's up to a position of strength. Lots of people don't know about the holding company..."

The holding company, Youssou N'Dour Head Office SA, controls, *inter alia*, Xippi Inc, the recording studio and cassette plant; Saprom, Youssou's tour promotion and concert equipment rental agency; interests in the Thiossane nightclubs Youssou shares with a local soft drinks magnate; and in another nightclub rented from the flash marble beach-side President hotel. And now the Jololi label, Boubacar's baby.

"What are you exactly, Boubacar?" I ask. "General manager?" "Hmm, well, yeah, maybe," says Boubacar, "or maybe I'm artistic director." And Youssou? "He's artistic director, too." Are you salaried then? "Hmm, salaried... well, I don't know," says Boubacar, "we'll see..." and then, "Shit, man, where are we?" veering abruptly across the traffic flow with a squeal of tyres.

We arrive at Youssou N'Dour Head Office offices, a rented two-storey verandah around a tiled, tree-shaded courtyard with benches and piles of magazines. Boubacar promises to locate for me, asap, a set of the first eight or so Jololi cassette releases. We are joined by Adama Sow, a neat young graduate of the University of Connecticut in flowing blue robe, latterly Youssou's communications director (maybe). We talk of Youssou's great renown – "You know the Government of the Republic of Niger called recently and asked him to go and do a concert to raise money to pay their civil servants?" And of the Jololi project, an attempt to create a systematic modern record label, with a coherent artistic policy, in an area where individual producers paying low one-off fees for cheap, quick recordings is the norm. And of finance, but only vaguely. Has Youssou's gold-disc selling "7 Seven Seconds" duet with Neneh Cherry provided a cash windfall to underwrite Youssou's current expansion? "I don't think one dollar of recent spending has come with '7 Seconds'," says Boubacar. "It's been more a matter of rationalising and reorganising."

Perhaps, but Youssou's brand-new house, to which we repair for a late lunch, took more than rationalising and reorganising to create. Situated in the rich suburb of N'Gor between the sea and the airport, this is pure Dakar Dallas, a great airy colossus with an open interior stairway allegedly evoking the neck of a kora (a harp-lute), balconies, lawns, dry indoor fountains, and a hotel-sized reception area with a grand piano, and numerous suites of ornate furniture for people to hang around upon in the African style, waiting to be received or to carry out some nebulous task. Behind the house, another large new building is slowly rising out of the churned red earth. Very slowly, in fact, given that the waterlogged concrete shell is due to open, in theory, in a matter of weeks as Youssou's new studio, superseding Xippi and hugely upgrading West African recording standards in one fell swoop.

"Xippi II, then?" I ask. "Yeah, maybe, we haven't really decided yet," says Boubacar. The cost? "One and a half million francs," says Youssou – a couple of hundred thousand pounds, an extraordinarily modest sum even bearing in mind African construction costs, which are two or three times cheaper than Europe. The specification? Structurally state of the art, but a slightly less advanced recording console, for robustness, says the French acoustic engineer, as we sit down to a delicious fish and rice *thieboudienne* served by the young cook. And the purpose? I ask Youssou, mindful of uncharitable Dakar gossip to the effect that his existing studio, Xippi I, is rarely used, except by himself. "Sure, it's so I can produce my own project in Africa, in good conditions," says Youssou, "but I'm taking a back seat more now and bringing on other artistes."

Filling in time before clubbing at the Thiossane, where Youssou later guest sings in a thrilling percussion-lashed set by a guest mbalax group, I visit one of Youssou's least charitable critics. El Hadj N'Diaye runs Senegal's first recording facility, Studio 2000, its biggest cassette duplication plant, and is sitting proudly in the vast gleaming interior of a converted Renault factory in central Dakar. It's shortly to open as the "Pyramide Culturelle", a £1¼m complex of audio and video studios, nightclub and restaurants.

Is there room for two megastudios? I ask N'Diaye. "No," he replies, "nor for two cassette duplicating factories, and if Youssou goes on undercutting my cassette prices I'm going to do a dumping – slash my prices till he goes out of business and then reinstate them at current level." Which N'Diaye could do, I later confirmed from independent sources, who also said that rivalry between the entrenched establishment N'Diaye and the high-profile newcomer N'Dour is a factor in the new studio race. And that the two new studios are indeed superfluous to current Senegalese requirements, which may be a reason for the burst of Jololi recording, to create a use, in effect, for the new Xippi facilities. Sensible thinking, but what is Jololi production actually like? I call Boubacar's car phone to try again to get some cassettes and maybe sales figures ("Sure, later today maybe ... What the fuck! ..." followed by a blast of car horns) and head for Youssou's other nightclub to see the Jololi Review, the label's new flagship touring unit, rehearsing for Europe.

Whatever else Youssou may be criticised for, it is never his music. Sitting smoking in an armchair, mike in hand, his singing is as tense and soulful as ever, and the musical mix from a half-dozen key Super Etoile musicians is sweet and assured, more acoustic than usual. Yandé Kodou Sene, the elderly praise-singer resurrected by Jololi, is absent in Paris, but the label's other star, Cheikh Lo, is present, dreadlocks swinging, his own agile voice complementing Youssou's. Cheikh Lo's debut cassette "Ne La Thiass" has made him a star in Dakar and done well for Jololi, having been bought for international CD release by the UK label World Circuit, who see it as an important new direction for Senegalese music.

Lo is a member of the Baye Fall, the patchwork-clad shock troop of Senegalese Mouride Islam, and a follower of a venerable marabout – holy man – named Mame Massamba. The hotel doormen bow and touch the marabout's amulet around Lo's neck as we leave for his battered Toyota. Mame Massamba's protection guarantees him against sorcery, explains Lo, an important insurance in the jealous, anarchic world of African music. Youssou's new operation is another beacon of light, offering proper contracts, artistic stimulation, royalties on sales... But how do you know what anyone's selling, given the piracy and the vagueness?

"Difficult," admits Cheikh Lo. "Probably the only man who really knows is Tialla Diagne."

And so to Tialla Diagne's, by common consent the biggest cassette distributor in Senegal, the man who actually shifts bulk cassettes on to the streets, but is also himself a producer. Diagne has a warehouse with 10 million cassettes somewhere, but operates from a kiosk the size of two phone boxes in Sandanga market. He looks about 14, is illiterate and speaks through an interpreter. Jololi cassettes are good quality, medium sellers, he says, but he himself produced six times as many albums last year. And he's planning a series of "megastores", with government backing, across the country, adds the interpreter. Not planning a studio, by any chance, I ask? Tialla Diagne smiles, with a look that says, "No, but El Hadj and Youssou had better watch out if ever I do."

"Ne La Thiass" by Cheikh Lo, is released this week on World Circuit Records. The Jololi Review, with Youssou N'Dour (left), Cheikh Lo (right) and others, opens the Oris London Jazz Festival on Friday

Personalities you can twust

Jasper Rees on Television

For clarity's sake, a drama that looks like the nursing sibling of *Soldier Soldier* should really be called *Sister Sister*. As titles go, though, **Staying Alive** (ITV, Fri) says almost as much: a bit on the melodramatic side, but then the series looks that way inclined too. As if running an advertisement of travails to come, it rushed you straight in with a student nurse attempting suicide. This hospital is so grim, even the staff are dying to get out.

In the end, the body count from the opening hour was confined to just the two. And one of those was a dispensable old dear whose cards were marked the minute a nurse on her first day promised to pop in and say hello after her shift. You just knew the poor innocent would turn up at the same time as the tin trolley from the mortuary: in timetabled dramas like this, where sex, crisis, violence and death fill the screen on a rota basis, these four-wheeled messengers of mortality are as reliable as Mussolini's trains. This is a teaching hospital, after all, and corpses are wonderful instruction aids: nurses have to learn to towel down the wet patch behind their ears.

There was another, much less artificial, scene when the same nurse was sent by a doctor to look for something left next to a bed. While rummaging, the nurse nattered absently to its occupant without at first realising that he was dead. Here she underwent the rite of passage negotiated by all hospital workers confronting their first stiff: like the cloak attendant who fools the punters at Madam Tussauds, they're essentially waxworks, but somehow they're so lifelike. You can't say the same for all those still in the upright position. Leashed to the script like a dog to its master, all too often characters only act because the dramatic masterplan needs them to embody some issue afflicting the NHS: their behaviour is illustrative rather than organic.

This is also a hospital drama in which they're taking the national shortage of blood literally: stocks are low in the special effects departments (gallons less than in *Cardiac Arrest* or *Casualty*), and there's a certain bloodlessness to one or two of the nurses. Sink a syringe into their veins and the only liquid you'd draw is sap. Knowing ITV, though, which takes care to give the people what they want, it's a hit: a very pulpable hit.

Only the stakes were wooden in **In Search of Dracula** with Jonathan Ross (ITV, Sat), and there were bags more blood. Ross's obsessions lead him inexorably in the direction of his own speech defect, *Dwacula* being the novel by Bwam Stoker set in Twansylvania and later adapted by Hammer Howwor with Chwistopher Lee. Perhaps his fascination for the Count is a displaced form of self-scrutiny. There's an undead look to Ross's own wanderings from channel to channel in search of something succulent to sink his teeth into. Hosting *The Big Big Talent Show* is a frank admission that this big big talent can't find his own show to call home. Like *Mondo Rosso*, *In Search of Dracula* was an arranged marriage between his gift for bumptiously trading small talk with celebrities and his weakness for crap old movies.

The fact that *The South Bank Show*, which was even acknowledged in the credits, covered exactly the same ground only three years ago ought to be a cause for deep shame at LWT. Oddly, given its regional components, ITV is the channel with the clearest picture of its own identity, but it is prey to cloud spots like this one that darken the blue skies of creative thinking.

One victim of ITV's strong brand identity is the old flagship, **World in Action** (ITV, Mon), now toeing the party line with sensationalist investigations: this week it tackled drug-peddling among nightclub bouncers using a hidden lens. Never mind the clubbers, it gave you, the viewer, a massive hit of adrenalin.

When not getting its kicks from candid cameras – see also *Police, Camera, Action!* or anything with Jeremy Beadle – the ITV way is to tackle a subject by throwing a showboating personality at it. After the Ross report on Dracula and the Bragg report on *Michael Collins* (ITV, Sun), **The Cook Report** (ITV, Tues) was on the tail of emigré criminals who have avoided extradition to face trial. In each case, he thrust an air ticket into their hands and invited them to fly home and prove their innocence. He knew they'd say no, and that's what makes it such great television. You'd love to see the look on his face if one of them had agreed to come: Cook's formula for confrontation means that he won't take yes for an answer. The judicial term for this maverick procedure is trial by television personality.

The channel's laboratories remain largely incapable of combining the constituent elements of a functioning sitcom: **Sometime, Never** (ITV, Sun) is the latest mutation, in which yet another woman hits her thirties with boy and / or job trouble. "My tits are hurtling south!" she grumbles. Unfortunately, the sitcom they're in is staying put for the winter.

Apocalypse imminent

Robert Hanks on Radio

"Very superstitious," Stevie Wonder sang, and he had a point. (He went on to say "Writing's on the wall, very superstitious, ladder's 'bout to fall".) Superstition does die hard. I know at least one person who's really impressed by the way that **Nicky Campbell** can always guess the star-sign of callers to his Radio 1 show ("You must be... Pisces, right?"). According to information received (from a friend of a friend who knows somebody...), Campbell asks callers what their signs are before they go on air and tells them to act surprised when he guesses it. Tackled on the question earlier this week, a Radio 1 spokesperson would neither confirm nor deny that the star-sign thing is rigged, only stating, "Nicky has mystical powers".

Still, this, isn't the only way that superstition lays its dead hand on us. **Analysis** (Radio 4, Thursday) was this week dedicated to millennianism – by which Michael Blastland meant not simply the belief that there is some significance in the approach of the millennium, but all sorts of apocalyptic beliefs. At present, there are around 150 books in print prophesying the end of something or other. There are other manifestations of doom in the air: apparently, 300 women in America have taken out insurance against the possibility of a virgin birth in the year 2000, which makes me feel I should be in the insurance business and probably makes God feel rather unwanted.

Blastland's thesis was, roughly, that we all like to feel that our lives are at some great turning-point in history, and it's even more tempting when we have a date like AD2000 handy. Even people who in theory have no significant investment in the date are feeling the pinch of apocalypse round the corner: Muslims, for whom the notional anniversary of Christ's has little significance, are still conscious, apparently, that we are living in times of great change. More controversially, Blastland attributed some end-of-the-millennium blues to the apparently rational Francis Fukuyama (the *End of History* man), although Fukuyama denied any pull from the date.

This was all interesting data, turned, as is often the way with *Analysis*, into something that was rather dry and rather hazy – a kind of intellectual sandstorm. As it happens, the year 2000 does indeed spell disaster, according to **In Business** (Radio 4, Sunday): Nigel Cassidy discovered that a vast number of computer systems – the kind that control useful things like bank accounts – will crash on New Year's Day 2000, because their calendars only run up to 1999. What was unnerving was not so much the inadequacy of the computers as the insouciance of the people using them. One businessman, asked if he was worried about his firm's systems, opined that you never know with computers: you just have to wait and see. Meanwhile, it seems that there aren't nearly enough computer engineers to fix all the computers affected in the next three-and-a-half years. Is this what Stevie meant when he sang the writing's on the wall and ladder's 'bout to fall? If so – that's pretty spooky.

هكذا من الاصل

THEATRE Death of a Salesman, Lyttelton, RNT

David Thacker's production of the play that exposes the sham of the American Dream is visually cluttered, ponderous and fails to elicit strong performances from its cast. By Paul Taylor

Getting to grips with the past: Willy (Alun Armstrong) and son Biff (Mark Strong) Photograph: Geraint Lewis

When playwrights direct their own work, the only thing they can bring to it, you often find, is reverence. Harold Pinter's recent production of *Ashes to Ashes* and Edward Bond's current staging of *In the Company of Men* are grievous cases in point. David Thacker's Lyttelton revival of *Death of a Salesman* suggests that the same thing can occur when a director's close relation to a writer becomes that of embarrassingly uxorious spouse.

That Thacker's infatuation with Miller was beginning to affect his reason first struck me when I interviewed him last year in front of an American audience. His test of a good critic, he disclosed, was whether he or she liked Miller's late play, *Broken Glass*. Not whether they had good arguments pro or con, but simply whether they passed the moral exam of liking it. I was too polite – or too cowardly – to remark, at the time, that such frisking for unacceptable beliefs could put you in mind of, well, the House Un-American Activities Committee.

From the moment the shutters open on this ponderous, muddled *Death of a Salesman*, the deep misgivings begin. The play, famously, shows how Willy Loman's memories keep invading his experience of the painful present, as the American Dream is inexorably unmasked as a nightmare. As much as his salesman's suitcases, the past is part of Willy's baggage, but you don't convey this at all well by giving the entire stage the look of a mental lumber-room.

You're reminded of Gertrude Stein's quip about there being no "there" there, as you look at a design that brings everything into a slightly potty phantasmal coexistence. For example, Willy's flame-haired ex-mistress lounges throughout in a bed that dangles in mid-air and it's so far upstage that when the big flashback comes of the fateful day when Biff caught his father with her, the actress has to take what looks like a massive hike through a second-hand furniture shop to take part in it. It's possibly the worse blocked sequence I've ever seen. The design is dominated by a huge, heavily faked looking tree that has a great slice cut out of its middle but magically remains upright. Symbolic, eh? Actually, what it reminds you of is one of those moments of suspended animation in a Tom and Jerry cartoon. You keep expecting it to topple and indeed rather wishing that it would.

Thacker has some excellent actors in his cast but has neglected to get powerful enough performances from them. With his knobbly features and bushy moustache, Alun Armstrong's Willy looks like an old *Punch* cartoon's idea of a British proletarian, so it feels pretty weird when he opens his mouth and out comes the complaining nasal quack of Dustin Hoffman in *Midnight Cowboy*. Good at conveying the fagged-out desperation of the man in the present, with his drooped trousers and dispirited penguin waddle, Armstrong can't convince you that this charisma-bypassed Willy ever had a heyday. There isn't sufficient pressurising avidity in the way he demands to be fed false hopes by his sons. In consequence, perhaps, Mark Strong and Corey Johnson give uncharacteristically external performances that don't communicate the knot in the guts. As the wife, Marjorie Yates becomes so grim and tough during the play that you feel she would be more than a match for Shakespeare's Volumnia.

It was for the National Theatre that Warren Mitchell gave one of the greatest performances of our time as Willy Loman. That achievement stands in no danger of being effaced by anything that Thacker has managed to elicit here.

Booking: 0171-928 2252

CLASSICAL MUSIC
Riccardo Chailly Barbican Centre, London

Thirty years on and Deryck Cooke's "performing version" of Mahler's uncompleted 10th Symphony continues to divide both performers and critics. Some conductors have taken it to their hearts, others dismissed it as too speculative and a few have preferred to promote rival "completions". I myself have, on occasion, doubted its overall validity, but Riccardo Chailly's warm-hearted exegesis at Wednesday evening's LSO Barbican concert almost convinced me.

Chailly's interpretative strategy is both sympathetic and cunning. He knows when to linger and when to move on and, most important of all, he charges the opening Adagio with a sense of anticipation. Those apocalyptic chords that suddenly explode three-quarters of the way through the movement signal a beginning, not an end, and Chailly's pacing banished any illusion of finality. The first Scherzo is a breathless scamper tripped by awkward metre-shifts; it's a gruelling course for any orchestra and the LSO sometimes stumbled their fences, but the central section was pleasantly *gemütlich*. The weirdly gyrating Purgatorio – an eerie miniature suggestive of folksongs heard in a delirious fever – was lean, teasing and unsettlingly surreal, while the second scherzo scorched, seethed and withered before a muffled drum (which Chailly placed off-stage) ushered in the long finale. Mahler had witnessed a fireman's funeral and wrote the experience into the last symphonic movement. Here, and indeed for the duration, Chailly held us captive with a reading which, although sometimes technically challenged, was warmer, more tender and more convincingly re-created than most I've heard in recent years. Cooke would surely have been proud and so would Berthold Goldschmidt, whose memory the concert honoured and who premiered Cooke's version of the score back in 1964.

Prior to hearing Mahler 10, we were riveted by an immensely forceful account of Britten's *Sinfonia da Requiem* – the opening "Lachrymosa" especially; the end of the "Dies irae", too, which fractures and fragments into a consolatory "Requiem aeternam". Consolation was also on hand the following night when Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* – a musical poem of unfaithfulness and reconciliation – received purposeful advocacy, and the first act of Wagner's *Die Walküre* drew a storm of excited approval. Chailly had employed a highly skilled trio of relative unknowns: a passionate and velvet-voiced Sieglinde in Katarina Dalayman, Wolfgang Schmidt's reedy-sounding though extremely intelligent Siegmund, and Gudjon Oskarsson's dark-hued Hunding.

Chailly treated the orchestral score as a symphonic love poem, highlighting salient dramatic details (such as the misty dissonances that colour the transition into Scene 2 and the broad trombone motif that marks Siegmund's loss of his father), launching Siegmund's great "aria" – "*Winterstürme*" ("Winter storms have vanished") – to a softly pulsing accompaniment and coaxing maximum affection from Sieglinde's "*Du bist der Lenz*" ("You are my Spring"). Thereafter, the pressure mounted, the playing was mostly superb (brass and lower strings in particular), the vocal exchanges appropriately impassioned and the dramatic finale quite electrifying. This was an affirmative, sun-drenched view of *Walküre*, unhampered by any spurious performing tradition and a powerful reminder that everything we'd heard during these two concerts bore Richard Wagner an inestimable debt.

Robert Cowan

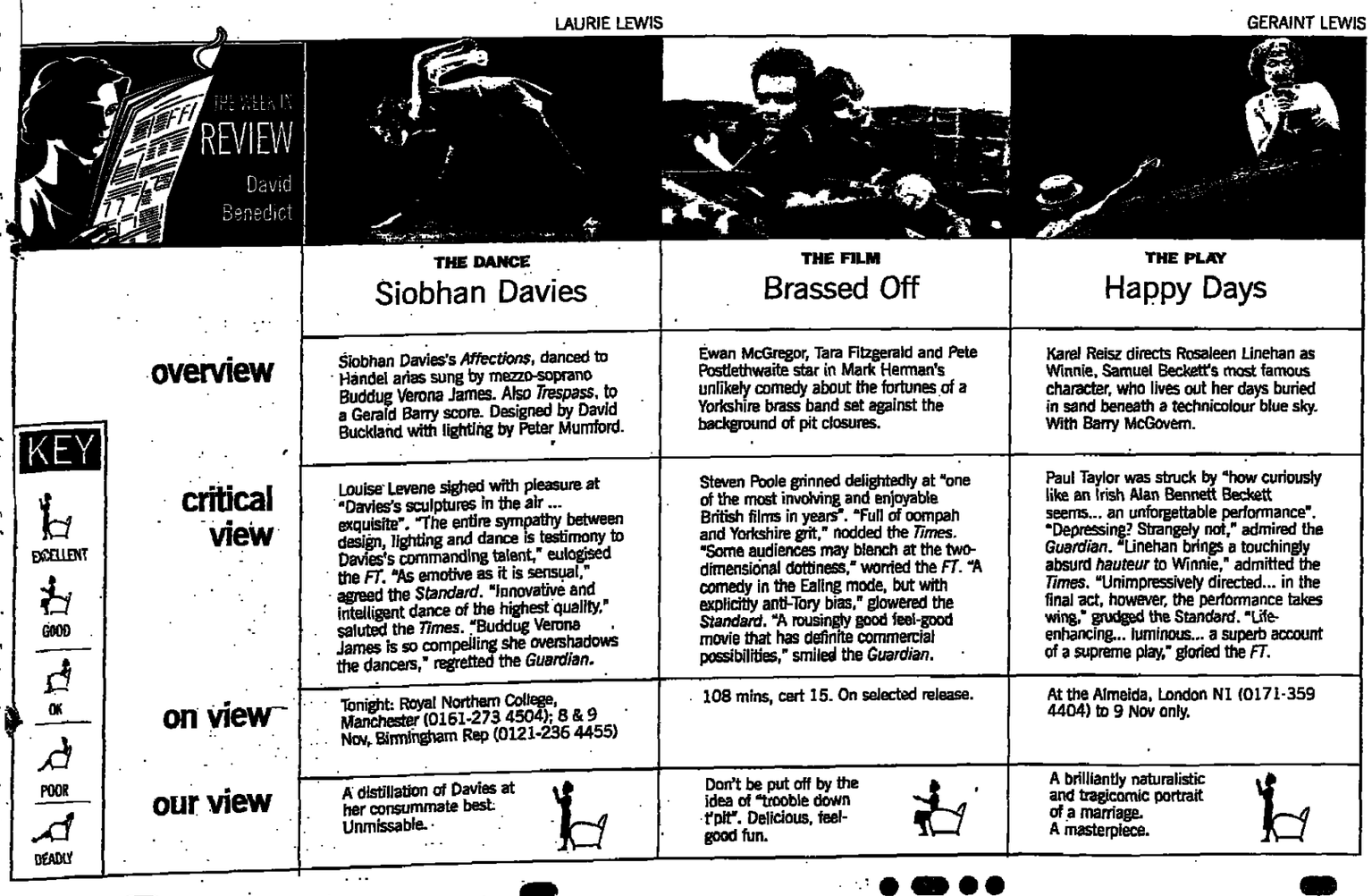
POP MUSIC
Dave Graney and The Coral Snakes, Dingwalls, London

Dave Graney first attracted himself a modicum of attention in the early Eighties as singer with the Moodists, an intermittently convincing, but ultimately rather slight brooding blues band best thought of as a toytown Birthday Party. Those were the golden days of Australian rock 'n' roll (don't snigger, it happened), a time when you could barely throw a brick off a Sydney bus without hitting a member of some implausibly fine young group. The Nineties has seen this once sparkling pool evaporate. This decade has yet to produce a new Australian group worth looking back over the back fence to see; the only worthwhile contributions have come from those left over from that earlier, faded renaissance. This cast of redoubtable veterans includes the evergreen Nick Cave, the former Saints guitarist Ed Kuepper, the ex-Go-Between Robert Forster and, having struggled long and hard to mainstream acceptance in his homeland, Dave Graney.

Graney is a likeable enough presence, given to rambling- between-song monologues that are sometimes even funny, and possessing a neat line in song titles – particular kudos is deserved for "Three Dead Passengers in a Stolen Second-Hand Ford" and "I'm Just Having One of Those Lives". Unfortunately, his act is hamstrung by a sorely limited musical and lyrical scope – his songs are invariably walking-pace country-rock rambles backing lengthy stories with no discernible point – and a visual presentation as baffling as it is irritating. Appearing on stage to perform ostensibly serious work while dressed frighteningly like an Albanian taxi driver at a karaoke evening signals only that Graney retains that regrettable Antipodean fear of capital A Art. This sort of overt self-parody has been the favoured get-out clause of the cowardly as long as bad wigs have been readily available.

Graney really gives the game away during the introduction to what is easily his best moment, "Trapped in a Song". His tedious rant about "wimpy Britpop bands" – depressingly loudly applauded by the overwhelmingly expat audience – is a signifier only of a little fish lost outside the confines of the even littler puddle he usually calls home. Graney is more worth listening to than most, but he badly needs to decide whether he's going to be a songwriter or a cabaret turn and, whichever way he goes, believe fully in his songs. The pickings on the barren middle ground between Nick Cave and Mike Flowers aren't sufficient to sustain anyone long.

Andrew Mueller



LAURIE LEWIS GERAINT LEWIS

THE WEEK IN REVIEW David Benedict

KEY	THE DANCE Siobhan Davies	THE FILM Brassed Off	THE PLAY Happy Days
overview	Siobhan Davies's *Affections*, danced to Handel arias sung by mezzo-soprano Buddug Verona James. Also *Trespass*, to a Gerald Barry score. Designed by David Buckland with lighting by Peter Mumford.	Ewan McGregor, Tara Fitzgerald and Pete Postlethwaite star in Mark Herman's unlikely comedy about the fortunes of a Yorkshire brass band set against the background of pit closures.	Karel Reisz directs Rosaleen Linehan as Winnie, Samuel Beckett's most famous character, who lives out her days buried in sand beneath a technicolour blue sky. With Barry McGovern.
critical view	Louise Levene sighed with pleasure at "Davies's sculptures in the air ... exquisite". "The entire sympathy between design, lighting and dance is testimony to Davies's commanding talent," eulogised the *FT*. "As emotive as it is sensual," agreed the *Standard*. "Innovative and intelligent dance of the highest quality," saluted the *Times*. "Buddug Verona James is so compelling she overshadows the dancers," regretted the *Guardian*.	Steven Poole grinned delightedly at "one of the most involving and enjoyable British films in years". "Full of oompah and Yorkshire grit," nodded the *Times*. "Some audiences may blench at the two-dimensional dottiness," worried the *FT*. "A comedy in the Ealing mode, but with explicitly anti-Tory bias," glowered the *Standard*. "A rousingly good feel-good movie that has definite commercial possibilities," smiled the *Guardian*.	Paul Taylor was struck by "how curiously like an Irish Alan Bennett Beckett seems... an unforgettable performance". "Depressing? Strangely not," admired the *Guardian*. "Linehan brings a touchingly absurd *hauteur* to Winnie," admitted the *Times*. "Unimpressively directed... in the final act, however, the performance takes wing," grudged the *Standard*. "Life-enhancing... luminous... a superb account of a supreme play," gloried the *FT*.
on view	Tonight: Royal Northern College, Manchester (0161-273 4504); 8 & 9 Nov, Birmingham Rep (0121-236 4455)	108 mins, cert 15. On selected release.	At the Almeida, London N1 (0171-359 4404) to 9 Nov only.
our view	A distillation of Davies at her consummate best. Unmissable.	Don't be put off by the idea of "trooble down t'pit". Delicious, feel-good fun.	A brilliantly naturalistic and tragicomic portrait of a marriage. A masterpiece.

KEY: EXCELLENT · GOOD · OK · POOR · DEADLY

Next week in the Arts

Interview on Monday: Nigel Hawthorne talks heart-to- *Fragile Heart* with Jasper Rees.
Visual Arts on Tuesday: Andrew Graham-Dixon reflects upon the making and meaning of Peter Paul Rubens's landscapes, now on show at the National Gallery.
Theatre on Wednesday: Terrence McNally tells Paul Taylor why he is sending Prunella Scales and Eleanor Bron on a passage to India.
Film on Thursday: Julian Schnabel scrapes the graffiti off the wall and sticks Jean-Michel Basquiat up on the big screen.
Pop on Friday: Forget New Orleans and Memphis, says Phil Johnson: Bristol is the sound-source to tune in to.

Life in darkest O'Hanlonia

Charles Nicholl has a brain-mangling time in the Congo

Congo Journey *by Redmond O'Hanlon, Hamish Hamilton, £18*

From the first words of the first sentence we are there. "In her hut in Poto-Poto, the poor quarter of Brazzaville, the *féticheuse*, smiling at us, knelt on the floor...."

It is strange but somehow familiar. We are a long way from home, in this sweaty part of town with a name like an African drumbeat. There is this potentially malevolent but faintly alluring figure, the *féticheuse*, and there is "us", for whom or to whom she is about to do something. The night is hot and the possibilities are endless, but may well include hapless ingestions of some brain-mangling local hallucinogen, and an encounter with giant crotch-burrowing parasites hitherto unknown to science. There's no doubt about it – we're back in darkest O'Hanlonia again...

To say that *Congo Journey* is typical Redmond O'Hanlon is, of course, a thorough recommendation. One could even say, though it is his only his third travel book, that it is "classic" O'Hanlon. His voice – that particular personal presence in the text which is the key to good travel-writing, far more than intrepidity and exotic locations – is unmistakeable. For the fickle reader, however, "classic" might soon start to mean "same old", and one may be expecting something a bit different next time.

Into the Heart of Borneo (1984) found Redmond O'Hanlon paddling up the rivers of Sarawak in the company of poet James Fenton. In *In Trouble Again* (1988) he hacked through the jungles of southern Venezuela with a night-club owner called Simon. This time the expedition leads into the equatorial swamp-forests of the Congo, a place of pygmies and gorillas, of bad magic on a bad stomach. The role of the travelling companion who on second thoughts maybe wasn't such a good idea is played by a gruffly empirical American psychologist, Professor Lary Shaffer. As before, O'Hanlon uses the small personal tensions of the situation as a comic counterpart to the larger difficulties and dangers of the expedition.

The quasi-scientific (or "crypto-biological") goal of their journey is to get a sighting of the legendary Congo dinosaur (or "sauropod") known as Mokélé-mbembe. This creature is supposed to inhabit Lake Télé, in the extreme north of the Congo Republic; a local biologist, Marcellin Agnagna, claims to have seen it.

This also is classic O'Hanlon, who has perfected this guise of the slightly unhinged professor, with his floppy sun-hat and his fogged-up spectacles and his capacious Bergen back-pack crammed with well-thumbed tomes like Bannerman's *Birds of Tropical West Africa*. He has something of the great 19th century explorer-naturalists like Charles Waterton about him, and indeed his first published book, *Charles Darwin and Joseph Conrad* (1984) was a scholarly study of the interplay of scientific thought and travel literature in the late Victorian era.

He is also a passionate ornithologist, and his journey has a secondary goal, fortunately – to see the rare, pennant-winged nightjar which at the age of eleven he "thought the oddest, the most desirable bird in the air." The book is enriched throughout by his knowledge of African flora and fauna, and by the exotic plumages of the sunbirds, hornbills, fishing eagles, and so forth, which he observes with such relish.

There is also in Redmond O'Hanlon, and this is a clue to the great charm of his writing, an emotional channel between his childhood and his adult journeying. He got his first taste of Africa from the books in his father's "big dark study", and now the real Africa is entwined with the view from that study window – a Wiltshire vicarage garden, "the yew, the bushes where we played jungles, the huge copper beech, the conker tree, and...a stream where I'd catch minnows in Lucozade bottles baited with bread". Later, his memories of childhood woodlands blur deliriously with the Congo jungle as he sweats through a fever that might just be the fatal *falciparum* malaria.

This is sometimes funny, because it belongs with his comic sense of the explorer as overgrown schoolboy; of the journey as a series of scrapes ("in trouble again"), or indeed as one of those jungle-games once played in a garden, and now effortfully re-enacted in the last few corners of the world where the grown-up 20th century has not yet intruded.

It is funny and also true – true that the explorer is often a case of "arrested development" (see Melanie Klein's study, *Love, Guilt and Reparation* and biographies of Burton, Speke, Stanley *passim*); and true that travelling and childhood are strangely close – everything magnified by unfamiliarity, fringed with the unknown, conducted in languages one doesn't understand.

For all the gung-ho, SAS-kitted *machismo* of his expeditions, he has that tonic touch of humility and self-mockery which is the essence of travelling.

This book has been six years in the writing, and weighs in at nearly 500 pages. It has a broad, Balzacian sweep, an air of *magnum opus*. This is remarkable in a genre that tends to the two-dimensional. However, it is also true that the experience of a journey is rather two-dimensional, offering as it does some intensely felt but fragmentary glimpses into other people's lives. In this sense, the novelistic dimension of *Congo Journey* is in danger of overblowing its material, of becoming rhetorical.

And though I am by no means asking the question unbeloved of travel-writers – the one that begins "Did you really....?" – it is hard to accept that some of the longer, more expositional chunks of dialogue are things that people really said.

In the size of the book, also, one loses something of the irony and obliquity which gave *Into the Heart of Borneo* its charm – the brevity expressive of the traveller's profound puzzlement, his inability to fill in the spaces between what he experiences. Here, perhaps, the spaces are too well filled in, but O'Hanlon is a very fine writer as well as a courageous traveller (travel writers may be one or the other but not many are both) and what he brings back from this extraordinary trip is richly entertaining and at times alarming in its brushes with the primaeval.

This is a traveller's yarn *de luxe*, and it would be churlish to complain if it goes on a bit too long.

O'Hanlon: perfecting the guise of a slightly unhinged professor

A multiple questionmaster calls his own bluff

We should cherish Robert Robinson as we used to cherish Evelyn Waugh, says Sheridan Morley

Skip All That *by Robert Robinson, Century, £15.99*

When I grew up, I wanted to be Robert Robinson; others of my 1963 ITN graduate-trainee generation had their sights set on Robin Day or Alistair Burnet, but Robinson was always my man. First of all, long before it was fashionable, he had a healthy disregard for, and distrust of, politics and politicians; secondly, he had a prodigious capacity for work – at one stage I seem to recall him writing a Sunday movie column while chairing *Today*, *Call My Bluff*, *The Book Programme*, *Points of View*, *Ask The Family* and *Vital Statistics* simultaneously on BBC sound and vision; and thirdly he always managed to imply that he had really meant to be somewhere else at the time.

For years I vaguely imagined him on leave from some rather elegant Oxford or Cambridge professorship, and I was a little nervous that these memoirs would turn out to be another port-drenched anthology of favourite High Table or Garrick anecdotes; I should have known better. *Skip All That* works as a wondrous comic novel, as well as an autobiography. Like two other, but curiously lesser-known Radio 4 broadcasters, Paul Vaughan (with whom he shared a headmaster) and Christopher Matthew, Robinson has a perfect ear for the eccentricities of outer-London suburban life in the years just before or after World War Two.

Robinson now turns up all too seldom on the airwaves, but can usually be seen popping into the more rarified delicatessens along the King's Road in Chelsea; that is now where you'll also find Sir Dirk Bogarde, and though I have no evidence that they have ever met, they remind me irresistibly of those two little men who used to pop out of weather-forecasting huts, Bogarde severe and gloomily predicting rain and frost, while Robinson beams with the promise of eternal summer.

Only occasionally in this book can there be found a sense of waste or regret, although looking back he feels he should have done something more meaningful with his life th[illegible]rnalism or broadcasting. Like many of us who had Nevill Coghill as an Oxford tutor, he seems to think he has never quite managed to deliver the right essay in the right week to the right man, although I would argue that some of his documentaries, notably the quest for B Traven, author of *Treasure of the Sierra Madre*, will live as long as arts programmes are valued or discussed.

Here too are ruefully funny accounts of trying to act with John Osborne and an increasingly recalcitrant Jill Bennett, of a pitched battled with Edith Sitwell and an unwise attack on American students published in *Time* magazine.

Robinson also has a dramatist's ear for great dialogue: interviewing Jayne Mansfield he asks about rumours that her bathroom has carpeted walls: "To which do you refer?" she trumps him, "I have 13". And a world of Strindbergian marital gloom is revealed when, after witnessing several decades of work, his mother asks his accountant father, "You like figures, don't you?" and he replies simply "No".

Far and away the best autobiography of the year, *Skip All That* is also infinitely sad in th[illegible] realisation that, were you [illegible] start in television now, it woul[illegible] be impossible to make a livin[illegible] out of it as Robert Robinso[illegible] has done. By the standards [illegible] today's tele-children he [illegible] politically incorrect, far to[illegible] knowledgeable and ultimatel[illegible] not desperate enough to b[illegible] allowed to earn a living in fro[illegible] of camera or microphone. H[illegible] remains the last of the gentle[illegible] man broadcasters, and we should cherish him as we used to cherish Evelyn Waugh.

Restoration kerfuffle

Melanie McGrath finds the pleasure-seeking Aphra Behn strangely familiar

The Secret Life of Aphra Behn *by Janet Todd, Deutsch, £25*

In these rumbling, sleaze-ridden, tabloid times it's a comfort to recall that scandal and surveillance are nothing new. The Restoration turned on hypocritical intrigues and petty insurrections. Public life existed for the performance of interests rather than as a platform for truths: it was a showy, burlesque world rather reminiscent of our own.

Janet Todd's brilliant biography of Aphra Behn, the poet, playwright and Royalist spy, is as much a guide to negotiating a safe passage through Restoration court intrigue as it is the story of a life.

So little is known of Behn's early years that any attempt to tell her tale becomes in itself some kind of detective work. Todd weaves a story together from what little evidence there is with precision, verve and confidence.

Behn was humbly born, but with aristocratic connections through her wet-nurse mother. When she was barely out of her teens, Aphra was dispatched to the swamps of Surinam to spy on English plantation owners. Another mission followed in Flanders, where, as agent 160, code-named "Astrea", she was sent to gather information for the English during the D[illegible] War. But her spying went badly – she was by all accounts a fairly inefficient secret agent – and was brought back to England out of favour and out of pocket.

Neither sufficiently beautiful nor well-enough bred to mix in court circles, Behn set about earning her living in the theatre. Feckless, sensual and expedient, she flourished in this transient, kaleidoscopic world. Having no patron and needing to earn her living, she wrote plays to entertain, knowing that nothing amused an audience punch-drunk on scandal, sleaze and sexual innuendo as much as more scandal, sleaze and sexual innuendo. And though avowedly Royalist and more cautiously pro-Catholic, she was not above dedicating her work to such Protestant favourites of the King as Nell Gwyn, in the hope of currying favour and, perhaps, a royal pension to boot.

But celebrity came more [illegible]asily than riches and Behn [illegible] to fall back on hack work – translating and copying – to pay her bills. Since play-writing and poetry paid as patchily then as it does now, many of Behn's contemporaries – Thomas Otway, John Dryden, even the Earl of Rochester – found themselves short of ready m[illegible]oney. For a time Behn was kept by John Hoyle, a bullying tyke later arraigned for buggering boys in his Temple chambers. Behn had no objection to Hoyle's bisexuality – or to any kind of sexuality come to that. While she loved men, she didn't take their sexual appetites particularly seriously; her comic verse is brimful of hapless impotents, their sapless organs shrivelled by the strength of female desire. She was altogether more suspicious of Protestant restraint than she was of libertine licentiousness. In an age where it was a small step for a woman from sex to syphilis, Behn's erotic imaginings concentrated on the murky business of sexual power and intrigue.

Under James II, Behn's work became more overtly propagandist. Her lightly-veiled critiques of the Monmouth clique put her at some personal risk but, in Todd's view, Behn's attachment to the Royalist cause had by then become not simply her ideology but an essential part of her being. The political and sexual machinations of the court gave Behn much of her material and sanctioned the gossipy theatrical culture which was her life.

It was inevitable that Aphra Behn should have become a symbol of both libertinism and liberty – that commonplace cocktail of romanticisation and vilification whic[illegible] dogs many public women' lives. Virginia Woolf went s[illegible] far as to say that Behn's pro[illegible]fessionalism "earne[illegible] [women] the right to spea[illegible] their minds." Todd makes n[illegible] such mistake. While her interest in Behn is feminist, addressing Behn's fluid sense of female identity and sexuality she avoids claiming Behn or her work as a prize for feminism.

Witty and pugnacious, Todd's book is as much a window on the public cacophony of the era as it is a portrait of a playwright. In public life it was an era not unlike our own. "It would be a long time before any woman would again feel able to accept so thoroughly the theatricality of her demeanour. Or to hate commerce and the feckless poor. Or to delight in and mock sex. Or openly to pursue pleasure and ease", writes Todd of Aphra Behn. The spectacle of Fergie comes unhidden to mind.

The book you meant to read

A Dance to the Music of Time
(1951-75)
by Anthony Powell

Plot: A 12-volume *roman fleuve* narrated by upper-middle-class Nick Jenkins, offering a comic view of the British at play, work and war from the Twenties to the Sixties. There are hundreds of characters. On a winter's day Nick watches some workmen clustered around a brazier. Reminded of Poussin's "Dance to the Music of Time", he recalls the past. At school, Nick's chums were Peter Templer and Charles Stringham. All three scorned Kenneth Widmerpool a hapless "tryer" without style. Nick grows up and embarks on publishing, sex, marriage, and the Second World War. He gains a moderate success and learns to view time's ironies with detachment. Over the years Templar becomes a raddled *roué* as Stringham collapses into alcoholism. In the War Widmerpool achieves ascendancy and is indirectly responsible for their early deaths. Widmerpool's obsession with power corrupts his judgement and his character disintegrates. In the Sixties he falls victim to a hippyish sect. He dies, breasting the tape on a mystic run. As Nick hears of Widmerpool's demise, he is gazing at the workmen and their brazier. The narrative returns to its beginnings.

Theme: Life is a ritual dance but the characters have no control over the music or the steps that they are compelled to perform. Nick is a survivor because he adopts patience and stoicism. Widmerpool is a failure because he believes in throwing his weight about.

Style: Lofty, pompous and self-deflating. Banal occurrences are pumped by the mandarin prose until they explode into absurdity.

Chief strengths: Powell creates a world which is as addictive as any soap. His control of events is such that the contortions of plot and character manage to be surprising but logically inevitable.

Chief weaknesses: The stiff upper lip approach to feeling can seem like emotional deadness tricked out in tweedy disguise. The female characters tend to dwindle into types.

What they thought of it then: Amis, Burgess, Larkin, Pritchett and Waugh rushed to bestow bouquets as each volume appeared. Woman were more circumspect with their praise.

What we think of it now: Although a respected Grand Old Man of English Letters, Powell's literary reputation is hanging fire. He is politically incorrect on such issues as feminism and the Left..

Responsible for: Those who read the book seeking out potential Widmerpools among their acquaintances. A forthcoming TV series which may try to turn *Dance* into another *Brideshead*.

Gavin Griffiths

Foreign Policy Home-work

Alec Douglas-Home was one of Britain's best ambassadors this century. By Patrick Cosgrave

Alec Douglas-Home *by D R Thorpe, Sinclair Stevenson, £25*

Alec Douglas-Home: Great Foreign Secretary, shame about the specs HULTON GETTY

In 1963, when I was an undergraduate in Dublin, I bought my first pair of spectacles. Somewhat to the bafflement of the optician I insisted on the half-moon variety, because that was the kind worn by the British Foreign Secretary, the Earl of Home whom, I was quite certain, would very shortly become Prime Minister, and whose precepts about and practice of international diplomacy I greatly admired. Home did become Prime Minister and I, naturally, followed the next year in British politics with a proprietary interest, being more than a little distressed when he was defeated in the general election of 1944.

Over the subsequent years I got to know Home, not intimately, but fairly well, in the way that a political journalist can get to know a senior politician. But the spectacles were to come back to haunt me. At a dinner party not long before her death, I put to his wife my thesis that the most remarkable thing about the 1964 campaign was not that he lost, but that he so nearly won.

After all, he had inherited a party in turmoil and a national economy teetering on the edge of an abyss. He faced, in Harold Wilson, probably the most consummate party political tactician of our time. He had to re-familiarise himself with the House of Commons after years of absence, and he had only months in which to establish his authority. "Yes", said Elizabeth Home. "It was very close. It was those bloody glasses that did for him. But, there, he wouldn't change them."

She may well have had a point, for great affairs often turn on what, in retrospect, may seem to be trivial matters. Home's brief time as Prime Miniser was dogged by the sedulous campaigns of Harold Wilson, *Private Eye*, and many cartoonists, to portray him as some sort of buffoonish squire who had wandered into the modern world from the grouse moor and thought he could run a government.

However, the time has passed when concentration on Home's short period at the head of affairs should be allowed to overshadow the crowning achievements of his life. He was twice Foreign Secretary, first during the premiership of Harold Macmillan, and then during that of Edward Heath. These were two very different leaders to serve but, as Mr Thorpe brings out very well in this diligent and admirable biography, there was a seamless consistency to the conduct of British foreign policy throughout both his periods in office which did a tremendous job in restoring Britain's self-respect, and earning her the respect of others, which had been lost in the years following the Suez disaster.

Mr Thorpe has the singular advantage of unfettered access to Home's personal archive, though it is important to add that his research took him far beyond this privileged terrain. The book was, moreover, undertaken at Home's invitation. Readers tend to approach work undertaken in such circumstances with suspicion, for it is easy to believe that the writer will be over-partial to the subject. Since this is the fullest account of Home's career which we are likely to see for many years it is vital, therefore, to stress that Mr Thorpe has been meticulous in research and scrupulous in the objectivity of his judgement.

Home wanted a Scottish biographer, and Mr Thorpe is particularly good on the Scottish nature of his character. It was this that gave him that inner steeliness of character which made him such a formidable international negotiator. Many a foreign diplomat, initially beguiled by the easy charm of his manner, came to rue a passage of arms with a diplomat who thoroughly expressed, throughout his official life, a belief in the truth of Curzon's dictum that the first rule of diplomacy was to know your own mind, and the second to make sure that the other man knew it too.

But there was much more to Home than an innate Scottish grittiness. He was widely and deeply read and thus was able to develop a profound understanding of the workings of international relations. This understanding provided him with a bedrock of certainty in his diplomatic dealings which was invaluable to his country.

Home also had the enviable gift of expression of difficult or unpopular concepts in simple, intelligible terms. This gift was most brilliantly expressed in his delightful 1983 book, *Letters to a Grandson*, which it behoves any aspiring diplomat to read.

His depth of understanding also gave him another advantage over his contemporaries in office. He understood better than any of them (and certainly better than Harold Macmillan or Edward Heath) the consequences of the end of empire, but he looked on that ending with an unsentimental eye. He set himself to exploit the complex balance of power which existed in the new world to Britain's advantage.

No-one saw more clearly than Home the possibilities open to a medium-sized power operating in a complex international system, to operate the system to its advantage here and there. He did much to develop our relations with the United States, and repair those with France, while his relations with the Soviet Union were a perfect blend of firmness and patient diplomacy. He also saw that the Soviet Union could not last and predicted its dissolution almost to the year of the dissolution itself. This country has been graced by many considerable Foreign Secretaries but, in my judgement, there has been none to match Alex Douglas-Home since the great Lord Salisbury.

Colour-me purple

Michèle Roberts investigates an annus horribilis

The Same River Twice *by Alice Walker, Women's Press, £16.99*

Alice Walker: assessing the damage MONICA THOMPSON

Alice Walker is the best-selling and Pulitzer prize-winning writer whose novel *The Color Purple*, filmed by Steven Spielberg, brought her international fame. Her work, inspired by black American tradition and experience, fuelled by idealistic visions of Africa, has perhaps spoken more strongly to female readers than to male. She has been a feminist icon whose books crash through the barrier separating popular from literary fiction. People felt *The Color Purple* really mattered.

Its heartrending story of black women's struggle for joy and meaning against a background of poverty and abuse was a powerful witness account for many, while it also opened Walker to accusations of badmouthing and betraying black men as violent feckless misogynists. What was clearly a tremendously powerful storm in the black community blew up and bruised many. Because the film of the novel reached millions who had not read the book, the brouhaha was considerable.

This book is Walker's attempt to look back and assess the possible damage. She has sub-titled it "A Meditation on Life, Spirit, Art, and the Making of the Film *The Color Purple* Ten Years Later." The overuse of capital letters perhaps hints at her anxiety. What she has produced is a self-defence and a self-portrait in which the desire to be honest battles it out with the need to make herself look as virtuous as possible. Her writing is so charged with personal feeling that it invites the reader into a dialogue and seems to welcome a personal response. Mine, I'm afraid, ended up as a compound of uneasiness, embarrassment and irritation.

While Walker's struggles against her attackers command our sympathy, this is then alienated by the way she chooses to present herself as eternally wonderful and wise. Most people would probably find it difficult to cope if suddenly thrust into the limelight of world fame, but Walker hides what I suppose to be her insecurity and fragility under a cloak of such monstrous egotism that her claims to writerly sensitivity and womanist consciousness invite derision.

Sometimes, when she keeps it simple, she says it well, as when she criticises the Bible for inculcating misogyny in men and self-hatred in women. When she turns to herself, however, she muffs it: "For that great gift, that I am me, with this spirit, this hair, this skin, this fluid, whose sexuality, this vision and this heart, I dare not apologise. I am too grateful." Self-assertion or protesting a little too much?

While Walker invokes images of shamanism as models for writing, and views her characters as spirits still whispering in her ear, the reader can also call up those problems with a saviour complex that sometimes afflicts female writers accused of being, or choosing to be, spokeswomen for their sex. While writing a novel can indeed feel like being possessed, as voices stir and rise in the imagination and haunt us, this doesn't mean we are messiahs.

Similarly, while I think a mystic's view of life as a breathtaking unity is a valid one, I still prefer this to be expressed elegantly rather than pompously, modestly rather than boastfully. I think you're asking for trouble otherwise.

Walker's book comprises extracts from her diary of the making of the film, which were clearly written with publication in view, her own script, finally abandoned by Spielberg, an example of black male criticism, plus replies defending the film and the book, fan letters from men and women, accounts of her dreams and visions and endless paragraphs of self-justification and self-praise. While modern ideologies of writing put the onus on authors to be either politically correct saints or fascinatingly corrupted sinners, both of which are irrelevant and false when it comes to considering the text, Alice Walker suffers from a subtle variant of this need-to-biographise. If you believe that you're powerless, you may not be able to recognise the power you do have. You may not be able to recognise the middle terrain of *femme moyenne sensuelle* and may feel obliged to transcend mess, muddle and conflict by becoming "perfect". Yet here and there in this odd book, particularly when she speaks about black people's experience of racism, Walker's voice is clear and calm, and reminds you of the narrative tone of *The Color Purple* itself. At the end of that novel, I remember a feisty and moving speech by the female character Shug about God being joyfully embodied in all the sensual material delights of this world like love, sex and food. I hope Alice Walker lets herself re-enter that earthly paradise.

The right stuff

Are we born good or do we learn it? By ColinTudge

The Origins of Virtue *by Matt Ridley, Viking, £20*

The 19th century produced revolutionaries in every decade, often flamboyant and sometimes violent, but the most influential of all lived quietly with his wife and children in rural Kent and played backgammon; and the only one remotely to match his significance grew peas and antirrhinums behind a Czech monastery. The ideas of Charles Darwin and Gregor Mendel, brought together in the early decades of the 20th century to create "neodarwinism", first changed all of biology and have for some time been creeping into all aspects of human affairs: economics, moral philosophy, politics. Indeed, the notions of Darwin and Mendel run so deeply and broadly that it has taken well over a century since their deaths to begin to realise where they could lead us. Huge scholarship and the coolest of heads are required to explore what might be involved; and Ridley provides both, as gracefully as ever.

Ridley's themes are the grandest that face humanity. By way of prologue: are our minds a *tabula rasa* when we are born? Or do we come ready-packed with specific preconceptions and proclivities – known broadly as "instincts"?

This was a key theme of philosophy long before Darwin and Mendel: John Locke, for example, favouring the *tabula rasa*: Plato conspicuously espousing the notion that we are born with a great deal in our heads. Both kinds of ideas, taken to extremes, have caused millions to be slaughtered or starved. Thus, over-belief in the role of genes in human nature led to the discipline of eugenics for which chairs were established at Oxford and at London – the latter of which, at University College, was discontinued only in the 1960s. Good left-wing intellectuals like H.G.Wells felt that those who were "black, brown, yellow, and dirty-white" should be stopped from breeding. Hitler took the notion to extremes; but it was the same notion.

Such memories have prompted enlightened moderns to deny the role of genes in shaping behaviour at all and to condemn the "genetic determinism" to which, they claim, the idea gives rise. But as Ridley points out, the opposite extreme – which he calls "cultural determinism" – has proved equally grotesque. Thus in Stalin's Russia Trofim Lysenko argued that Mendel was an evil subversive and that living things are shaped not by hypothetical "genes" but by their experiences. This appealed to politicians who wanted to mould Marxian creatures by Marxian politics. But although people might have seemed for a time to adapt to this political conceit, plants are less forgiving; when Lysenko subjected the Russian wheat crop to his theories, it perished, and millions starved.

Interestingly, it has become politically correct to remember and condemn the horrors of "genetic determinism" but to overlook the shortcomings of over-zealous "cultural determinism". Yet the truth as usual lies in between. Human beings are indeed born with "instincts" but these instincts are not determinist in nature. They are, as Ridley elegantly puts the matter, "predispositions to learn". Beyond doubt, we are equipped to learn some things (like language) much more easily than others (like maths). But where genes rough-hew, culture shapes the ends.

Ridley's next and larger brief is to ask whether our instincts, our predispositions to learn, push us towards goodness or badness. Again, philosophers have divided themselves down the middle, and people again have died in the clash of ideologies. A lineage extending from the Sophists of Greece to Thomas Henry Huxley, via St Augustine, Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes, held that human beings are essentially selfish and act altruistically only to make themselves feel better. Another lineage, from Plato to Peter Kropotkin, most famously including Jean-Jaques Rousseau, suggests that human beings are innately benevolent, but are corrupted by society.

Modern Darwinian-Mendalian thinking takes the heat out of the issue. Yes, our behaviour is influenced by our genes and yes, as Richard Dawkins put it, our genes are "selfish": and that seems bad news. Yet as Bill Hamilton began to show in the 1960s, our selfish genes can prompt us to behave unselfishly because they are selfish: that is, a gene will happily sacrifice the individual that possesses it in favour of a greater number of individuals who also harbour copies of itself. But of course, in many circumstances, our selfish genes can prompt us to behave selfishly. In short, we have it in us to be both good and bad. But then of course, G E Moore's warning of "naturalist fallacy" should always be heeded: the fact that our instincts prompt us to do any particular thing, does not make that thing right (or wrong).

In the end, the key task for all human beings is to get along with other human beings: we achieved biological success by sharing work and becoming individually specialised, but on the down side we need other people just as ants need other ants. In short, we need "society". But if society is simply what Thomas Huxley (paraphrasing Hobbes) called "a war of all against all" then the outlook seems grim. Fortunately, we have evolved devices for sociality just as we have evolved a capacity for altruism. As Bob Frank of Cornell has argued, natural selection favours those who form contracts, if only for the selfish reason that there is safety in numbers; and since contracts depend upon trust it is in the interests of each of us to demonstrate our trustworthiness.

Overall, says Ridley, the task is to define and foster a way of living that encourages what can properly be called our better instincts: our capacity for unselfishness and trust. His own suggestion is a return to a structure in which humans deal directly with other humans. It was through such interaction that the capacity for sociality first evolved; and only by such interaction can it be nurtured.

The new neodarwinian ideas are powerful, encouraging, and complex. They should be more widely understood, and it is a great pity that some of the people who write about them most conspicuously don't understand them at all. But Ridley is the real thing: a proper writer. He understands, enhances and conveys.

The books you listen to

Great Political Speeches (BBC, 2 hrs, £7.99) is a unique and brilliant political history in miniature, selected and presented by Peter Hill from BBC archive recordings of the actual words of British politicians from William Gladstone (sonorously commanding) in 1889 to Michael Howard (defensively sibilant) in 1995. **Barbara Vine's The Brimstone Wedding** (Chivers, 11hrs 35mins, by mail order 0800-621-0182, £17.99), a chillingly perceptive fugue and variations on the theme of unfaithfulness, is perfect company for a long distance drive. Read with rueful energy by Juliet Stevenson.

Christina Hardyment

Mystery in Minnesota

Lucy O'Brien enjoys a surreal tale

The Enchantment of Lily Dahl *by Siri Hustvedt, Sceptre, £9.99*

Lily Dahl is a tough, blonde 19 year old waitress with a Marilyn Monroe fixation. Living in small town Minnesota she dreams of bigger things – a starring role in a show on Broadway, perhaps, or a part in Hollywood. For now she has to settle for playing Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the local Arts Guild. Her life begins to change when Ed Shapiro, a painter from New York, arrives in town.

As Lily's relationship with Ed grows, she finds herself the target of gossip and ghostly intrigue, and is obsessively pursued by Martin Petersen, a disturbed young man who collects newspaper cuttings and constructs strange things in his cellar. Events escalate until a shocking dénouement which forces Lily to reassess her life and the confines of her sheltered upbringing.

This is Siri Hustvedt's second novel, and unlike her debut *The Blindfold*, an account of a woman's psychic disintigration, *The Enchantment* is told with the gripping pace of a straightforward mystery tale. Whereas her characters in the former work tended to be more like cyphers, here Hustvedt has a fully-realised cast of odd bods, eccentrics and down-home mid-Western folk. There's Dolores, the prostitute who keeps a perfect trailer home; Dirty Dick and Filthy Frank Bodler, twin brothers whose mother was mysteriously murdered many years earlier and Lily's neighbour Mabel, a 78-year-old "bluestocking" who becomes Lily's mentor.

Hustvedt tells the story with panache. Her perfectly observed Minnesota world is slightly askew, slightly surreal. Objects are invested with layers of fetishistic meaning, like the old white shoes Lily steals from the Bodler place, or a table napkin on which Martin writes the word MOUTH.

Hustvedt unfolds her mystery in sparse, evocative prose while the American Gothic atmosphere is grounded in her blue collar characters' spicy dialogue. Lily is a likeable heroine, fearless in the way she walks headlong into danger. Her friendship with Mabel is the most absorbing, relationship in the book. Ironically, Lily's affair with Ed is less convincing – it starts off with her performing an improbable strip show for him in her window, fizzles in the middle while she chases after her ghosts, and is resurrected at the end when he proclaims undying love.

Better observed and developed are the townspeople who circulate in Lily's world, with their Scandinavian roots, simple values and crooked tales. Enchanting, too, is Hustvedt's sensual description of the mid-Western landscape – the stalks of snake grass in the swollen creek after it rains, the "distant dull hammering of a woodpecker", the smell of burning alfalfa on the wind.

In the same way that Hustvedt created a precisely structured imaginative world in *The Blindfold*, here she reflects the sense of stories within stories through Ed's paintings of the townspeople. Each portrait has three boxes in the right hand corner, compartments that depict scenes from each sitter's secret tale. There is also Lily's "dream inside the dream", when she wakes one night to find the moonlight shining on the body of a young woman, her "bloodless palms screwed to the floor".

Though her first novel was analytical and poised, its themes were overly arch. With *The Enchantment of Lily Dahl* Hustvedt's themes are more fully integrated into the narrative, woven in with the skill of a natural born storyteller.

Three years after witnessing the Liberation of Paris, Henri Cartier-Bresson was in New Orleans on a Harper's Bazaar assignment with the young Truman Capote. Capote, just 23 and looking distinctly ill-at-ease – more Nineties bratpack than post-war intellectual – had just been selected to appear in the 1946 O Henry Memorial Award Volume for his short story, 'Miriam'. This amospheric portrait is taken from 'Cartier-Bresson and the Artless Art' by Jean-Pierre Montier (Thames & Hudson, £50), a biographical examination of the work of the draughtsman turned photographer.

A close shave for the home alone singleton

Emma Hagestadt investigates the grooming rituals of the 30-something female

Bridget Jones's Diary *by Helen Fielding, Picador, £12.99* **Mad Cows** *by Kathy Lette, Picador, £12.99*

As fans of Helen Fielding's work will already know, 1 hot date + 2 freshly waxed legs = possible sex. In *Cause Celeb*, Fielding's first book, heroine Rosie Richard is reduced to some hasty leg-scraping in the loos of a Soho restaurant. And in the author's latest creation, *Bridget Jones's Diary*, a bout of self-depilation in front of *Newsnight* ends in the kind of sticky disaster you'd rather not think about.

It's this sort of intimacy with the grooming rituals of most right-thinking 30-something females that has already made Bridget Jones and her weekly diary such a solace to regular readers of the *Independent*. Now in novel form, Fielding's diary records one of the happier years of Bridget's life, and her metamorphosis from Home Alone Singleton, into the kind of woman who can get men to take her on mini-breaks to country house hotels.

Things begin badly with a crush on Daniel Cleaver – the rogue-male in the publishing house where she works. Drawn by his lean good looks and witty office E-mail, she falls victim to the charms of this pro at the art of "emotional fuckwittage" – thereby breaking her new year's resolution not to get upset over shallow men, but "form relationships based on mature assessment of character".

Depressed, but not daunted, Bridget embarks on a mission to develop "Inner Poise". The end result: a new job and a new man – the kind her mother always dreamed of; a very rich nerd in a diamond-patterned sweater.

It's one of the tests of Fielding's talents as a comic writer that her truncated sentences ("Hunger pangs force self out of bed. Make coffee, consider grapefruit. Defrost chocolate croissant") manage to hold up over 300 pages. It's only the novel's sub-plot, featuring Bridget's hormonal mum and her Portuguese lover, that teeters on the edge of farce, and needs a little more space in order to breathe.

Equally frank on the subject of female discomfort, though even more careless with the word "labia", is Australian writer Kathy Lette. Here it's not hairy legs we're talking about, but bikini line jobs – the kind performed by wayward sanitary towels. Still on the baby jag, Lette's follow-up to her previous novel, *Foetal Attraction*: is dedicated to Calpol and Disposable Nappies, and tells the sorry tale of life after birth.

Maddy Wolf's first expedition with her newborn spirals out of control when she's arrested in Harrods for shoplifting a packet of prunes. Finding herself in Holloway, and at the mercy of a corrupt social worker and a lawyer with a "heat-seeking penis", she has no alternative but to smuggle her baby out in her best-friend Gilly's handbag.

In a double act reminiscent of the *Ab Fab* team, Maddy and friend Gilly wise-crack their way through a burlesque adventure of exhausting hilarity. Maddy eventually orchestrates her own escape from prison, only to confront the father of her child at a party hosted by Prince Charles and Linda McCartney in aid of the environment.

Relentless in her use of one liners and acronyms (NBFMK, not bad for Milton Keynes; BC, life before childbirth) – Lette's humour at times bears down with the force of a sledge hammer. Good for those in the milky throes of post-natal depression who need their jokes writ large. Less amusing for those who don't.

To be, or not to be, single, is the question at the heart of these novels. And both writers reach the same conclusion as struggling mother Maddy Wolf: "the other woman's grass isn't greener – it's just bloody astro-turf."

Left on the shelf by a less than cultural companion

Lachlan Mackinnon laments the blandness of a new literary reference book

The Oxford Companion to Twentieth-Century Literature in English *edited by Jenny Stringer, Oxford, £25*

Jenny Stringer declares that her aim in editing this book was to offer "an overview of literature in English from 1900 to the present day." She hopes it can be read for pleasure, as well as serving students and teachers. As well as dealing with individual writers, the book has entries for individual works, major figures in the humanities, literary movements and critics. It means to present a literary culture as much as literature itself.

Aldous Huxley's conversation is said to have betrayed daily which volume of *Britannica* he had been reading, but most people don't read reference books for pleasure. When they do, they want something that will surprise them. It is a pity, therefore, that "adverse criticism has been eschewed in favour of a broad consensus of literary taste". The book has very little personality, but, rather, a pervasive blandness which rapidly becomes boring.

The entry on *Ulysses*, for example, begins with a description of the plot, too sketchy to serve as a summary. It ends with the judgment that *Ulysses* is "a richly rewarding, hilarious, and moving novel about being human." True enough, but it is impossible to imagine who could make much use of this vacuous puffery.

All the entries on individual works I have looked at suffered from the same incomplete generality. As we move towards the present day, the choice becomes increasingly questionable. Does Peter Ackroyd's *Hawksmoor* really deserve a separate description while Graham Swift's *Waterland* does not?

The author-entries would have gained from full rather than partial lists of their subjects' works. Biographers are covered, but while Michael Foot is in, Roy Jenkins is omitted – and the Foot entry fails to mention that he was once leader of the Labour Party.

Of course, the "adverse criticism" which is overtly "eschewed" returns as simple censorship. Looking for critics themselves, we find that the Marxist Terry Eagleton is in while the humanist John Bayley is out (except as Iris Murdoch's husband). Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, a critic whose most widely read work is a translation of Derrida, is in, while translation itself is not covered.

Omitting translation falsifies the record. Only the Elizabethan age rivals ours in the variety and brilliance of translations made, but there is little sense here of how much writing in English has been invigorated by foreign example.

Children's writing is also deliberately excluded, which leads to some interestingly spectral effects. Alan Bennett's "adaptation of *A Wind in the Willows* scored a major success at the National Theatre in 1990". At least the title is got right when we learn of A.A. Milne that "His most successful play was *Toad of Toad Hall* (1929), a faithful adaptation of Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* (1908)." As for Kenneth Grahame, neither he nor his masterpiece receives an entry. The entries on philosophers are rather better. That on Saul Kripke is an elegant, brief exposition, for instance. Here again there are discriminations. Wittgenstein, whose major work was written in German, is included, but not Hannah Arendt, who wrote mostly in English. Arendt's role in the New York intellectual community and her importance to W.H. Auden may make her a more important thinker where literature is concerned.

There are entries on popular genres like "Romantic Fiction" but only the entry on "Bestsellers" goes any way towards informing us about what was widely read in this century, despite the editor's avowal that "literary merit was not the only consideration; national or ethnic identity and a fair representation of the various periods of the 20th century also played a part." This admission suggests that the project was flawed at the outset. Yes, there is a great deal of information here, but its random nature, the acts of omission which imply critical thought without declaring it, and the failure to fulfil even its declared aims make this Companion a very unreliable guide.

Paperbacks

By Christopher Hirst and Lucasta Miller

Peking Story by David Kidd (Eland, £8.99) These luminous, bittersweet reminiscences are set in 1949, when the still medieval Peking was thrown into turmoil by Mao's revolution. The author was a UK exchange student who married the daughter of a Mandarin aristocrat. For a while, he lived in her family's ancient palace, surrounded by austere aunts and bizarre trappings of luxury. A final lavish party was disturbed by both the police raid and part of the house falling down. As Communist harassment increased, Kidd and his wife left for the US, where she became a NASA scientist.

in a coda, he describes his return to the city in 1981, sadly changed but still touched with magic.

The Sound of History by Roy Palmer (Pimlico, £14.00) Palmer's magisterial survey reveals the tenacity and scope of the ballad, from rural laments of the Thirties ("The hens won't lay, we can't make hay/Down on Misery Farm") to 17th-century sexual inadequacy ("she tried my flail/I was forced to quit my thrasing O"). Similarly, a lyric from 1837 plays on Victoria's lust for Albert: "Since I got married/I'll try the sausages day and night". Quoting hundreds of songs, Palmer's lively commentary illuminates this radical tradition. Contemporary verses supporting CND show the popular ballad lives on today, though Palmer's comment "the intention is propagandist, not aesthetic" is only too true.

Japan in War and Peace by John Dower (Fontana, £8.99) An MIT professor, Dower's academic esssays are exceptionally lucid and revealing. He specialises in debunking ill-informed views. The belief that Japan came near to creating an atom bomb during the war is shown to be piffle – its scientists were starving and the project would have required half the country's copper. Dower also demolishes the wartime image that Japan projected of "100 million hearts beating as one". In fact, defeatism was widespread from 1942. This monolithic view of the Land of the Rising Sun persists today. But, as Dower notes, the "economic miracle" has produced a deeply riven and insecure society.

The Princess of Siberia by Christine Sutherland (Robin Clark, £8.00) Tolstoyan in its epic sweep, this gutsy story of passion and strength concerns

Rural laments: the skeleton at the plough, 1874, from 'The Sound of History' by Roy Palmer

Princess Maria Volkonsky, the cultured wife of a Decembrist revolutionary. When this inept, Byronic uprising was crushed in 1825, she, like several other wives, followed her partner 4000 miles to his Siberian prison-mine. Maria showed great resilience in this deprived, but entrancing tundra, bringing up her family and even building a theatre in the capital of Irkutsk. It was, she said, "a kingdom I bought with my tears." After 26 years, the couple were allowed to return to Moscow for a few final years of freedom. A tremendous tale, addictively told.

Touch the Dragon by Karen Connelly (Black Swan, £6.99) A travel book based on the diary of a precocious 17-year-old Canadian spending a year in Thailand, sounds grim beyond words. But the result isn't too unbearable, though she can't resist detailing the breakdown with her lover back home ("I fall asleep crying") and is prone to indulge her poetic sensibilities: "This yank of body and spirit is a small dying." Such failings are outweighed by her gift for description ("Beggars have hair like oiled wire; a fearful electricty snaps under the skin"). Connelly's initial anguish at the constraints of Thai life transforms into affection. Thankfully she does not find another boyfriend.

The Heart of India by Mark Tully (Penguin £6.99) During his 25 years working for the BBC in India, Mark Tully had to field criticism that he was too much in love with the Subcontinent to avoid bias in his reporting. No one, however, could take exception to the profound love he has poured into this collection of short stories, his first venture into fiction. Set in the villages of Uttar Pradesh, and inspired by real situations and real people, these unpretentious tales get straight to the heart of their characters, whether a wife desperate to become pregnant or a railway official caught up in a mesh of corruption between two rival gangsters.

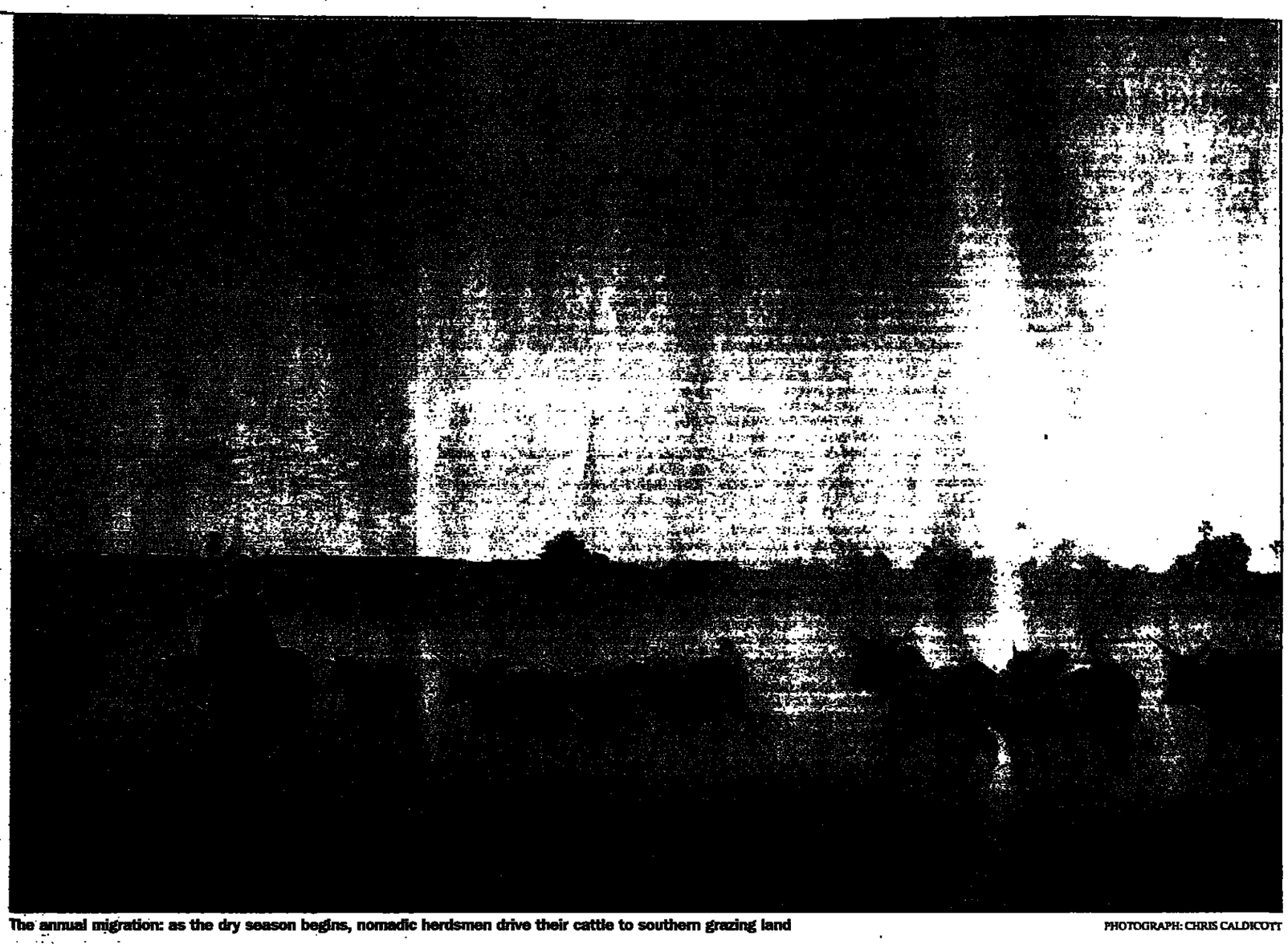
Its Colours They Are Fine by Alan Spence (Phoenix, £5.99) Alan Spence's interlinked stories of Glasgow street-life draw on his own experience. In marked contrast to the surreal imagery which characterises the work of Scottish writers such as James Kelman, Irvine Welsh and Jeff Torrington, his tone is gentle and his style naturalistic. The most affecting pieces are those which deal with childhood's innocent pleasures: the mystique of cheap Christmas decorations seen through the eyes of a six-year-old boy or the rebellious ecstasy he feels when swinging from the lavatory chain in imitation of Tarzan.

The Beautiful Mrs Seidenman by Andrej Szczypiorski (Phoenix £5.99) Set in German-occupied Warsaw in 1943, and written in the shadow of Communist dictatorship, this literary classic explores the relationship between Poland and its totalitarian invaders. The eponymous beauty is a young Jewish widow whose blonde hair, blue eyes and forged papers have so far kept the Nazis at bay. Her arrest, interrogation and eventual release form the centrepiece of a finely controlled narrative composed of multiple threads.

travel & outdoors

Take me to the river

Chris Caldicott follows the herd through Mali



The annual migration: as the dry season begins, nomadic herdsmen drive their cattle to southern grazing land

PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS CALDICOTT

Within the next few days, an official announcement will be made that is crucial for the nomads on the fringes of the world's biggest desert. At Bamako, the capital of Mali, the government declares the date for the annual crossing of cattle over the Niger River to their winter grazing ground. This decision is also critical for travellers seeking a magnificent December spectacle.

As the annual dry season begins in sub-Saharan Africa, pastures on the edge of the desert turn to dust. This is the time for the nomadic herdsmen of Mali to drive their cattle southward. Despite the devastating droughts of the last decade, this still involves many hundred thousand head of cattle. Even at the beginning of the dry season the Niger is a substantial river. At Diafarabe the river narrows where it meets the Diaka, this is the location of the first and largest of the annual crossings.

The cattle herders spend months in the northern Sahel up to and beyond Tombouctou. Their emergence from the desert means a reunion with their wives and families.

Hundreds turn up at Diafarabe on the day of the crossing to welcome the returning men. For one day a remote, timeless village on the bank of the Niger is transformed into a colourful stage for one of the most captivating events in West Africa.

The date of the crossing changes every year, determined by the level of the Niger. To prevent complete destruction of grazing grounds the cattle must remain spread out. The crossing at Diafarabe is the first of many which take place over the period of a month, moving down river as the water level drops. A council of elders determines when and in what order the herds will cross and where they will graze.

Getting to Diafarabe to witness this spectacle is not a simple matter. When the water is high enough the village can be reached by the river steamers which sail between Bamako and Mopti. By the time the water is low enough to permit the cattle to cross, it is by definition too low to allow the passage of the steamers. Other river transport is very slow and infrequent.

Mali is one of the poorest countries in the world, the annual income per capita is not much over £100 per person. Beyond Bamako, and the few towns linked to it by road, there is very little development. Electricity and running water are very rare. Diafarabe has neither, nor does it have anything approaching a public transport system linking it with the rest of Mali.

To travel without one's own vehicle beyond the town of Segou requires much patience and luck. There is a dirt track as far as Ke Macina; the last section from there to Diafarabe is increasingly vague. The vehicle I eventually found going in this direction after three days in Segou was an old Parisian delivery van, sold off after a trip across the Sahara a decade earlier. The 200-kilometre drive took 16 hours.

The journey began, as so many do in Africa, after much delay. Once the driver was satisfied that 29 people in the back of the van reached a threshold of discomfort not even his greed could exceed, we drove a hundred metres and spent a further half an hour pouring petrol into the van. Another hundred metres to the police check post for another stop of half an hour, then we left Segou. We continued in a similar vein until, in what appeared to be the middle of nowhere, in the middle of the night, myself, a man who claimed to be the chief of Diafarabe, and half a dozen other passengers disembarked.

The "chief" invited me to be his guest once we reached his village. This involved waiting until two *pirogues* (dug-out canoes) emerged out of the darkness, after much shouting to summon them. We waded out to them and were paddled across the Diaka, under a million stars, to the dark shape of Diafarabe. No electric light or unnatural sound challenged the medieval atmosphere as I was led down a maze of narrow alleyways between mud buildings to the "chief's" compound. I slept on a flat roof, under the desert sky.

The fresh cool air of dawn brought more delights: a rising sun revealed a village of flat roofed mud houses between palm trees, and a dramatic towering mosque. Fishermen were casting their nets into the Niger and breakfast fires were being lit – the place was alive with the sounds and smells of ancient Africa.

As Diafarabe is located on a peninsula between the Niger and the Diaka, the cattle cross both rivers to pass through the village. The Diaka is crossed first and this is where most of the activity takes place. It was rumoured that the crossing would start at 9am. By 10am there were hundreds of people gathered along the cliff above the river. A handful of dignitaries, ministers from Bamako, high ranking military and the ambassador of Burkina Faso were seated under a makeshift shelter. And there was a film crew from Mali Television – that night the event was to be lead story on the national news. By 11am there were thousands of cattle gathered on the far bank marshalled by men on camels and horses, dressed in desert robes and turbans. Half an hour later the crossing began.

For the rest of the day, wave after wave of cattle came across in small groups with their herders. Sometimes swimming, mostly wading through the water, then stampeding over the floodplain towards the cliff. There is only one break in the cliff where the cattle may ascend to the village. This creates a bottleneck of converging beasts – and a cacophony of noise and dust as they jostle to pass. It is the most popular place to watch the crossing from, especially among the children.

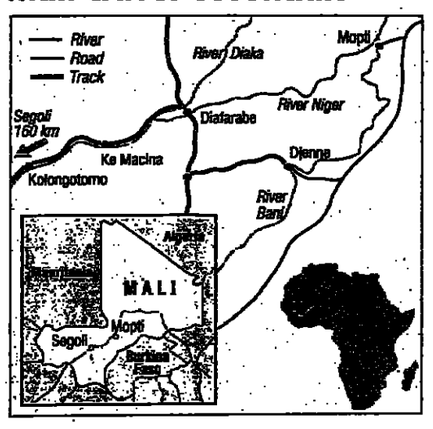
The herders shouted, whistled and wielded sticks against their confused livestock. Occasionally some of the cattle would break away from the main group and run off out of control, to the great delight of the crowd. As the day passed, most of the audience drifted back into Diafarabe where a small stage had been erected from which the dignitaries were to make speeches. After that there was a presentation of the finest bulls. Over excited, with their horns painted in bright colours, they charged into the crowd, causing a great deal of chaos and laughter.

At nightfall there was music and dancing. A megaphone powered by a truck battery was connected up to a microphone which was attached to the end of a flute. The flautist played at such volume and speed, and with so much feedback, that his instrument sounded more like a heavy rock guitar than a flute. He was accompanied by some manic drumming, performed with equal volume and energy. By comparison, the dancing was tame. Three girls, with their backs to the audience, shuffled about while small boys followed them around, shining torches on their shoulders. Meanwhile, the musicians became more and more animated, rolling about on the ground and leaping in the air as they played. Some women from the audience joined in the dancing. With sudden bursts of energy they bent down to the ground, then whipped their torsos through the air, arms waving until they were bent over backwards.

Getting away from Diafarabe is no easier than getting there. Occasionally motorised *pirogues* call in on their way to Mopti: no one knew when there might be one. There was no more certainty about finding a vehicle back to Segou. There was, however, a truck leaving the next day, in the same direction as the cattle, to Djenne. So I followed the herd.

The road to Djenne, via Sai, was as slow and non-existent as the one between Ke Macina and Diafarabe. Djenne was worth all the hardship of the journey. A 15th-century settlement of the same vintage as Tombouctou, yet much better preserved and more lively. The Sudanese mud architecture is the finest in the Sahel. The mosque is particularly impressive. The Monday market is held in its shadow: a collection of people as colourful in their attire as those at the cattle crossing, in from the villages, and from as far as Mopti gathering to sell their wares. I found a country boat, a *pinasse*, leaving that night. So I climbed aboard and set out for Mopti – if you're flexible about arrangements you can go far in Mali.

Mali travel essentials



Getting there: the Niger river is not the easiest place to reach from Britain. You can travel to the capital of Mali, Bamako, via Paris on Air France. Until the 15 December, the Africa Travel Centre (0171-387 1211) has a fare of £505 including tax from several UK departure points to Bamako. You must stay away at least 10 days, but no longer than one month.

Getting around: the Thomas Cook Overseas Timetable contains some details of travel within Mali but there is a lot to be said for being flexible.

Tours: Explore Worldwide (01252 319448) has an 18-day tour of Mali departing on 10 January, costing £1,365 including flights, accommodation and some meals.

Red tape: British passport holders must obtain a visa in advance through the Embassy of Mali in Belgium, at 487 avenue Moliere, 1060 Brussels (00 322 345 7589).

Getting to grips with indolence

Daniela Bezzi visits the drawing room of Italy

Lake Como is one of the places where the British idea of a holiday was born. The rest of the Grand Tour may have furnished material for a lifetime of artistic refinement and intellectual one-upmanship; but Como offered relaxation pure and simple, exquisite balm for all the senses. Here was where the hectic northern soul got to grips with indolence and its charms.

Luckily, not too much has changed here in the past 150 years: it's still one of the fanciest places in the world to do nothing much – on the terrace of the Grand Hotel Villa Serbelloni, for example, in the honey-coloured light of a day in early autumn, with a gentle breeze rippling the water of the lake, the small ferries and the occasional paddle steamer plugging back and forth against the backdrop of the misty mountains beyond.

Como has been a retreat from the rigours of everyday life since Roman times. Pliny the Younger wrote besottedly of his two villas by the lake, one of which he called Tragedy (it rose from its setting like an actor wearing the tragedians' boots), the other Comedy. He wrote that from the windows of Tragedy, built on the lakeside, "you can quite simply cast your line from your bedroom window without getting out of bed, almost as if you were in a boat". That, written some 1,800 years ago, captures the Como spirit pretty precisely.

The lake's enduring popularity is aided by its accessibility: as it is only an hour or so from Milan by car. This also has its downside, of course: in the past, Como's towns and villas were served only by waterborne traffic, whereas now a typically narrow road with typically aggressive traffic skirts the entire lake. This is one of several reasons why Bellagio is the most tempting destination on the lake. At the tip of the promontory which divides Lake Como to the west from Lake Lecco to the east, it is not directly on the way to anywhere.

So Bellagio has by geographical good fortune what the rest of the lake can only mourn the loss of: peace and quiet. All the other elements of a perfect Como holiday are present here in strong concentrations, too.

It has, for example, two of the region's best villas. Como has long been considered "the drawing room of Italy", where the tycoons retreat from the heat and humidity of Milan to recuperate in the lake's famously salubrious microclimate. They built fabulous villas here. A few minutes' walk from Bellagio's town square is Villa Melzi – built in the 1800s by the eponymous lord, a friend of Napoleon's. It is cleanly neo-classical in design, a crisp, white rectangle seen from across the water, and still inhabited by the family. The garden, open to the public, is a splendid example (the first in the region) of an Italian "English" garden: superficially it has the wilfulness and informality prized in English gardens, but in fact it has been levelled, landscaped and planted with great cunning to make it appear much larger than it is.

The other villa is Villa Serbelloni, whose grounds dominate the tip of the Bellagio promontory. It is now owned by the Rockefeller Foundation, and the enormous garden is dotted with the small, stuccoed dwellings in which scholars and writers lucky enough to benefit from Rockefeller largess live and work. The house, which twists along the contours of the hillside, lacks the architectural pretensions of other Como villas, but the garden makes up for it in ambition, and the views from the top across the lake and back down the promontory, across lawns dotted with conical topiary, olive, cypresses and off to the misty mountains beyond the water, are among the most memorable Como has to offer.

Bellagio is a satisfactory size, small enough to walk around in 20 minutes, big enough to offer a variety of nice old shops to browse in, selling locally made silks, ceramics and glassware, and a large array of bars and restaurants. It's a pure tourist town, having sprung up in response to the success of its first hotel in 1825; but a tourist town agreeably pickled in amber. There are practically no buildings of the 20th century, and very little about the holidaymaker's experience here can have changed significantly since the Twenties. Which is not to say that it has gone to seed, merely that it has found the era it likes and is sticking to it.

A stay here is not complicated or demanding. You eat; you drink; you admire the lake; you potter around the shops, up and down the steep, cobbled lanes; you take tea and delicious biscuits offered by the Hotel Florence. In the evening, if you are lucky enough to be staying at the Grand Hotel Villa Serbelloni, you put on your best frock and and waltz to the music of the Caffé Strauss Concerto, under the coffered ceiling.

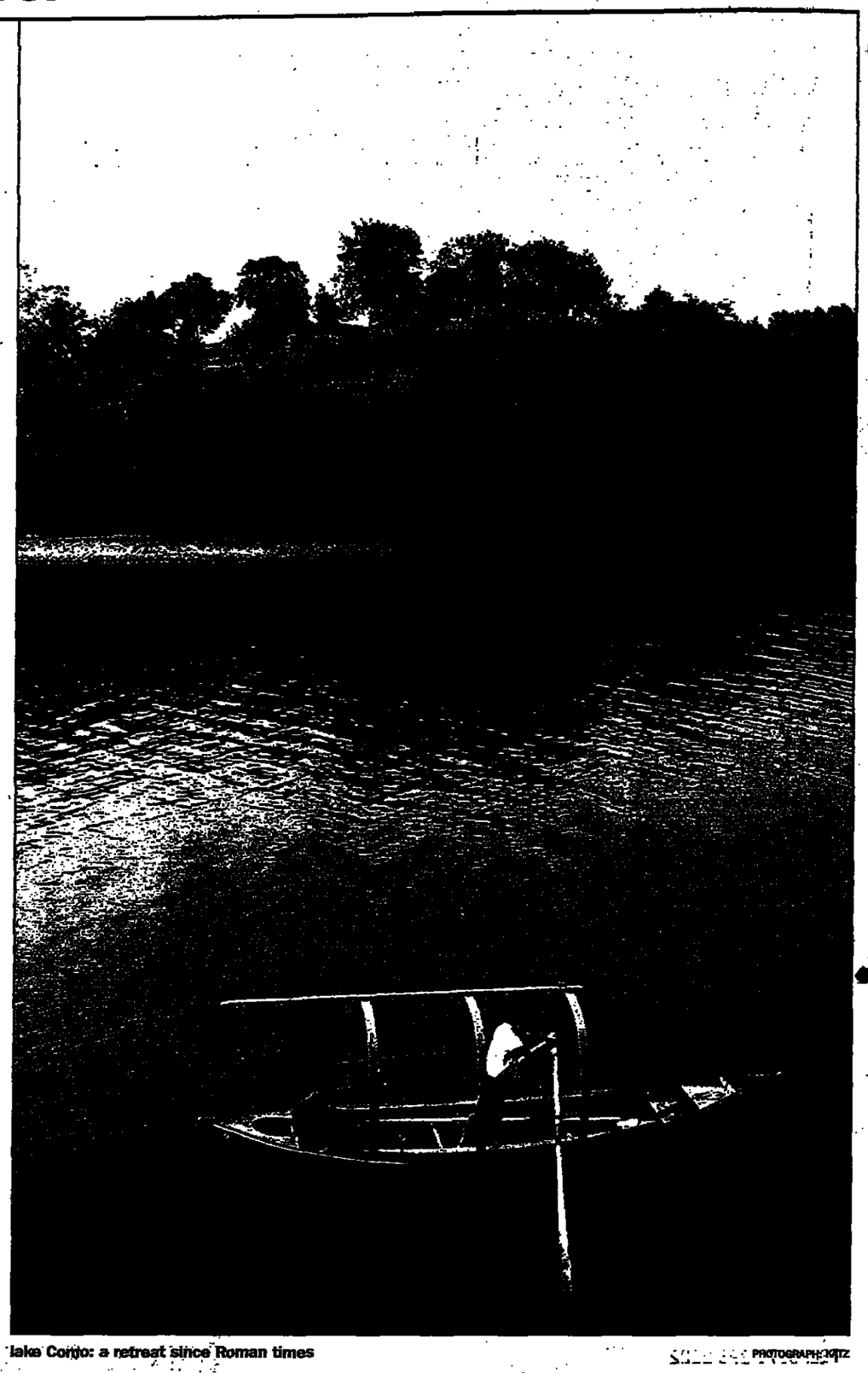
The great ochre-coloured hulk of the Hotel de la Grande Bretagne was the first truly luxurious hotel to open in Bellagio in 1861. The Grand Hotel Villa Serbelloni, at the foot of the promontory – long detached from the estate whose name it shares – was originally built as a gift by the estate's owner, Count Frizzoni, for his wife. The Countess, however, hated the place, and the Count sold it off almost immediately. In 1872, with two new wings added, it opened for business as Bellagio's second luxury hotel.

The two hotels became vicious rivals, even backing different candidates at election time. However, 25 years ago the Grande Bretagne closed down, since when the Serbelloni has had the top of the market to itself. It has not squandered this good fortune: like Bellagio itself, the hotel is welcoming, discreet and luxurious in a deeply old-fashioned way, without being either snobbish or seedy.

Of course you don't have to do next to nothing during your stay in Como. The Serbelloni has a new fitness centre where you could pump iron; there are golf courses in the hinterland , and healthy hikes among the gentle, wooded hills south of Bellagio. It's debatable, however, whether the lake is best appreciated with sweat running down one's face. Better, surely, as evening approaches, to board an ancient paddle steamer and, lulled by the thump thump thump of the engine, explore Como's shore in the most supine fashion possible.

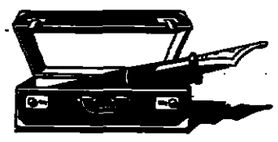
Getting there: Daniela Bezzi paid £156.40 for a return flight from London to Milan on Alitalia, through the Ciao Travel Agency in London (0171-493 8947). She travelled from Linate Airport in Milan to Bellagio by car, which is much the simplest way. Rental cars available at Linate. The cheaper but more complicated solution is to take train or bus to either Lecco or Como and then take a ferry from there to Bellagio.

Staying there: Bellagio has 16 hotels, ranging from the one-star Albergo Ristorante La Pergola (00 39 31 950 263), singles at around 85,000 lire (£35) to the splendour of Grand Hotel Villa Serbelloni (00 39 31 950 216), where rooms range from about 300,000 to 470,000 lire (£125-195).



Lake Como: a retreat since Roman times

PHOTOGRAPH: KOTZ



something to declare

trouble spots

Transport problems

South Africa (Johannesburg, right): Three people were killed in a rush-hour shooting believed to be related to taxi wars. Dozens of people have been killed in years of violence between rival taxi operators over passengers and routes in Gauteng province around Johannesburg and Pretoria, as well as other parts of South Africa – *Reuter.*

Russia: It is not known whether aircraft maintenance procedures are always properly observed. Where possible fly directly to your destination on a scheduled flight originating outside Russia – *Further information from the Foreign Office Travel Advice Unit (0171-238 4503).*

Tanzania/Zaire: Ferry services on Lake Tanganyika have been suspended after marauding Zairean soldiers, trying to escape eastern Zaire's battle zone with their families, stormed aboard a Tanzanian ferry on the lake and stole luggage, money and a cargo of fish – *Reuter.*

Colombia: There is a general suspension of rail services. The state railway is bankrupt, and has been closed. A new "shadow" organisation, STF, has resumed rail service, under contract, on some lines – *Thomas Cook Overseas Timetable.*

a likely story

If you don't put your clocks forward tonight you could miss your flight – this column last week

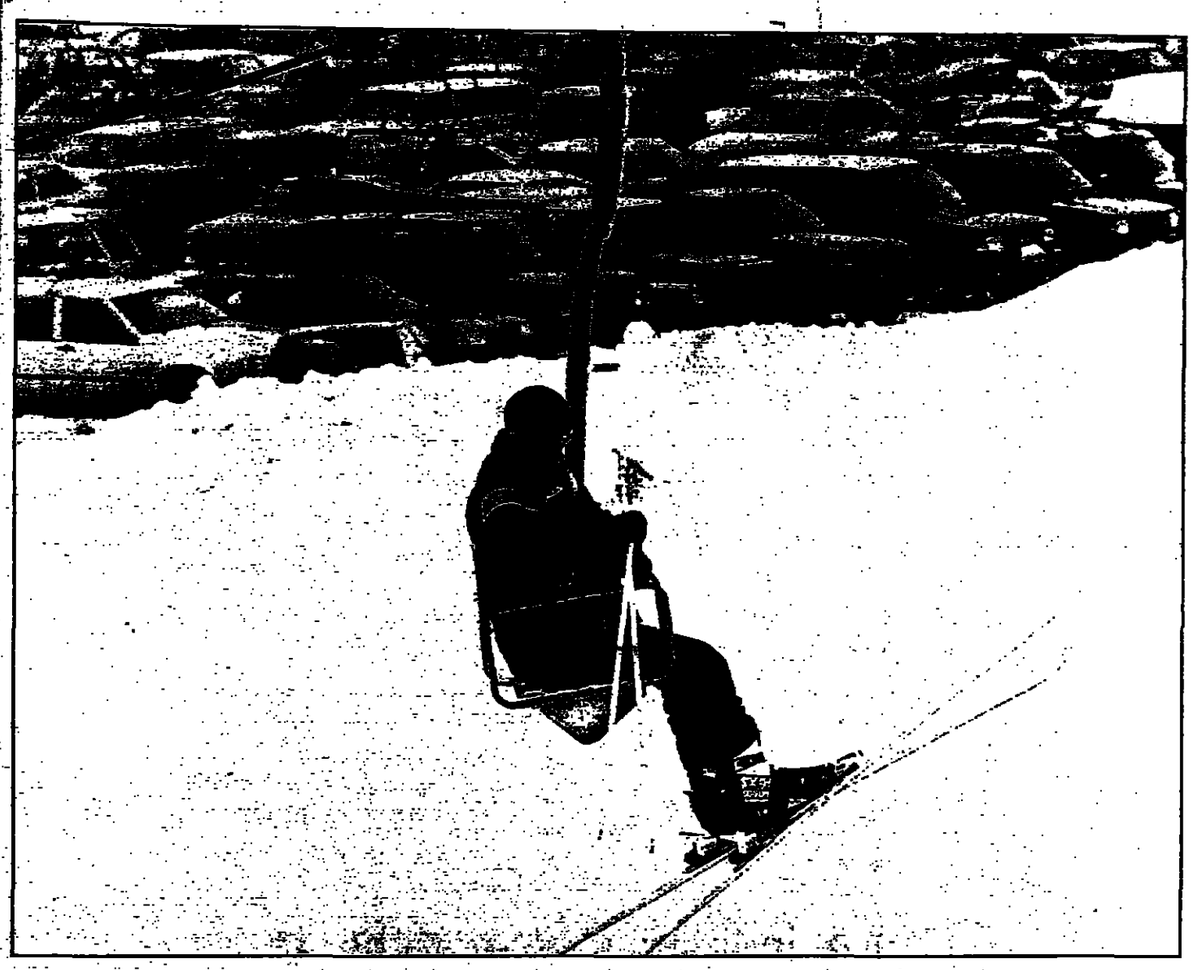
If you had followed our advice last Saturday, you would certainly not have missed your flight. Instead you would have been at the airport two unnecessary hours early. Chronological confusion with the space-time continuum here at Canary Wharf meant we advised that a 7am GMT flight would depart at 6am BST; instead of 8am BST. Thankfully the error was spotted before the travel department turned up for work two hours early on Monday.

bargain of the week

People in south-east England can benefit from the best post-privatisation deal so far – so long as they buy today, 2 November. Connex – which runs services south of the capital, from Kent to Dorset – offers five consecutive days of travel for £10, which works out at £2 a day. Children aged 5-15 pay £5. For comparison, the cheapest day trip from London Victoria to Bournemouth is £23.70. Where two or more companies operate trains on the same stretch of line, eg London to Gatwick or Southampton to Bournemouth, you may travel only on Connex services. From next Monday to Wednesday, the ticket is valid only after 9.30am. And if you really want to visit Bournemouth, don't try to do so tomorrow (when Connex trains do not operate there).

Whatever happened to green skiing?

Ecological awareness has diminished, reports Stephen Wood



Does skiing harm the environment? Only 17 per cent of the beginners questioned at Cairngorm (above) think it does COLIN MCPHERSON

It is alarming how far some American snowboarders take their respect for wilderness areas. An article on "Low-impact back-country boarding" in a recent issue of *Snowboarder* magazine points out that a serious leave-it-as-you-found-it philosophy involves "no net trash gain" on the mountainside: its checklist of things you should take away with you includes banana skins, rolling papers and "your own waste (ie shit)".

On toilet paper, which the author warns "will hang around for a surprisingly long time in a cold climate", it suggests that the best practices are to "burn it, pack it in a sealable bag or, better yet, use snow as a substitute. After the initial shock it cleans gently and easily with no paper residue". For further reading on the subject the article recommends a book called *How to Shit in the Woods* by Kathleen Meyer (published by Ten Speed Press, if you're interested).

It is equally alarming how lightly British skiers now take the effect of winter sports upon the environment. Andrew Holden, a senior lecturer at the University of North London, has been researching the attitude of skiers to their environmental impact at Cairngorm, in Scotland. Standing at the top of the windswept slope with a clipboard, he asked them whether skiing is harmful to the environment. Only 38 per cent of the advanced skiers thought that it was; among the beginners (still with a lot to learn) the figure was 17 per cent.

Holden was even more chilled by the response to the question "If you knew that by skiing you could damage the environment, would you be willing to ski less *frequently*?" A large majority of the advanced skiers, who betrayed what Holden calls "a hard attitude" throughout the survey, were unwilling: only 18 per cent would be prepared to cut down on their skiing. Among the bewildered beginners, 29 per cent would do so; the intermediates, at 21 per cent, were intermediate.

Five years ago, such a survey would surely have introduced a different response. In the early 1990s, environmental damage was a big issue. This newspaper devoted a whole page, in December 1991, to an apocalyptic vision of what skiing was doing – and could do – to the Alps. The high-pressure group Alp Action, founded the previous year, drew everybody's attention to the ecological effects of artificial snow-making (prolongation of snow cover to the detriment of plant life; heavy use of water and energy resources), piste levelling (removal of topsoil; destruction of vegetation) and off-piste skiing (damage to young trees; disturbance of wildlife habitats). In those days, skiing seemed a shamefully brutal thing to do in the fragile Alpine environment.

Since then, economic recession has largely pushed green issues off the news agenda. Skiers have changed: now only Cairngorm's advanced (ie experienced) skiers remember the environmental concern about skiing, which came as a surprise to beginners.

The skiing industry has changed, too. The poor snows of recent years have led to a huge increase in the number of snow-making cannons in the Alps, a process which *Stern* magazine referred to as "tourism's armaments race". But poor snow may also have contributed to the decline in the number of skiers, which has limited expansion at most resorts (thus weakening the environmental lobby, which tends to be mobilised by major developments). And the loss of winter income has led resorts to try to develop their summer business, making them more environmentally aware, at least superficially: slopes scarred by skiers don't appeal to summer hill-walkers. (Perversely, Cairngorm has proposed a major development – a funicular railway for which planning permission has been granted, but is now subject to appeal – yet it is the increased traffic of summer visitors which most concerns environmentalists.)

Andrew Holden's research in Cairngorm suggests that skiers (or at least the British ones) now regard mountain resorts less as a natural environment, more as an environment for skiing – a playground. But some resorts still see marketing potential in environmental improvements, notably Les Arcs. Its agenda has partly been thrust upon it, because it borders a national park; and it partly flows both from the resort's policy decision to develop as a better rather than bigger skiing area, and from its need to cater for the cosmetic demands of summer visitors. But the various initiatives at Les Arcs (burying power cables, limiting off-piste skiing to protect the habitats of the endangered black grouse, banning cars from resort areas) are all laudable – and the most recent is strikingly canny.

This year the resort has stripped a piste of its topsoil, taken out all the rocks to smooth the slope, then replaced the topsoil and planted it with hardy Alpine grass. The result will be a slope which is skiable with only 5cm of snow, minimising any need for snow-making; which is less subject to soil erosion; and which looks great for summer visitors.

Back-country snowboarders will be less impressed by Les Arcs' installation of 10 toilets on the slopes. But ski resorts are in the business of responding to customer desires (market research at Les Arcs showed they wanted toilets). So if customers don't want protection of the mountain environment, the resorts have little incentive to provide it. The same is true – probably more so – of tour operators, to whom skiers actually pay their cheques. Which makes all the more laudable the attempt by the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO) to increase environmental awareness among its members' customers. Most of its 29 ski tour operators subscribe to (and publish in their brochures) the "Environmental Skier's Code", devised by AITO and Green Flag International to "conserve the natural beauty of the mountains for the future". Three of them – Le Ski, Simply Ski and Ski Peak – are also participating with AITO this season in an EU-funded project to generate increased income for environmental management in the Alps.

The most troubling thing about Andrew Holden's research in Cairngorm is that the new arrivals in the winter sports market – young snowboarders – show less respect for the environment than any other group, even the advanced skiers. It is a pity they have not learned from their American brethren that we shouldn't shit on the mountains.

For information and brochures on the Association of Independent Tour Operators, phone 0181-607 9080.

The winner takes a hike


Simon Calder

The worst prize offered by any travel section, ever, has attracted an embarrassment of entries. This was the plan: match excerpts from *Independent* travel stories with a time and place, and win a trip with me on a writing assignment to Berlin. In accordance with our no freebies policy, though, this trip involves a dismal combination of train, ferry, more trains and finally several hundred chilly miles of hitch-hiking across northern Europe before checking into a former DDR youth camp in the east of the city. After a day-and-a-half of heavy duty research, the lucky winner gets to retrace his or her steps in even colder temperatures.

Instead of the three oddballs you might expect to enter such a competition, several hundred applied (though a dozen or more took the precaution of omitting names and addresses to make sure they could not be contacted). But picking a "winner" (to use the term loosely) from among those who did identify has been a struggle.

Most people got the answers right. So the final decision was made on the tie-break: if the first prize is a dismal weekend across the autobahns of northern Europe, what should the second prize be?

Since the competition coincided with the party conference season, it was not surprising that a number of political suggestions were made. J Tydeman of Bangor offered: "Backpack to Brussels with Sir James Goldsmith", while Adrian Barker of Tonbridge suggested "A free rail and hotel pass for all three political party conferences".

A number of entrants felt that the choice of companion was crucial. P Moore of Poole offers the "Same trip as the first prize except accompanying John Gummer, who passes his time telling you about his fine environmental work," which is I think the first time I have been compared favourably with John Gummer (at least I think it's a favourable comparison). C Bettington of south London recommends "A two-week trip across south London with John Major, listening to his boring anecdotes about his youth".

Certain motifs developed rapidly – and south London was one of them. For example, Michael Knaggs of Hampstead suggests "A short, all-expenses-paid walk in the south London kush". Other parts of Britain were also picked out: Will Dew of Rugby chose "An odyssey to Milton Keynes, in February, to count and classify roundabouts and other interesting road formations. Camping accommodation available on isolated, deserted islands", while Alun Roberts of Mid Glamorgan recommends "A full morning tour of the Barbican, conducted by Lady Porter and Anneka Rice".

Retaliation in the London/Wales needling is provided by Neil Setchfield of London SW7, with the blunt: "A weekend in Cardiff". (Chris Walmsley of Surrey is disqualified for a wholly unwarranted slight against my home town: "A long weekend in Crawley on a budget of £35".)

The single entity that attracted most suggestions is, like *The Independent*, celebrating its 10th anniversary this month. Tim Levell of Guildford puts forward "A journey around the M25 on its 10th birthday, complete with stops at its visitor 'attractions' – Heathrow, Lakeside Thurrock and Clacket Lane Services". Gordon Hulley of Perthshire: "A four-day walking tour along selected stretches of the M25: engineering, farms, Travelodges and the like, with only the fumes and the birds for company". And Peter King of Bromley: "A dismal hitch around the M25 and up the M1 to interview the 'November-Uniform-Juliet' man in Luton" (an official at Luton Hoo who demanded to see my National Union of Journalists card).

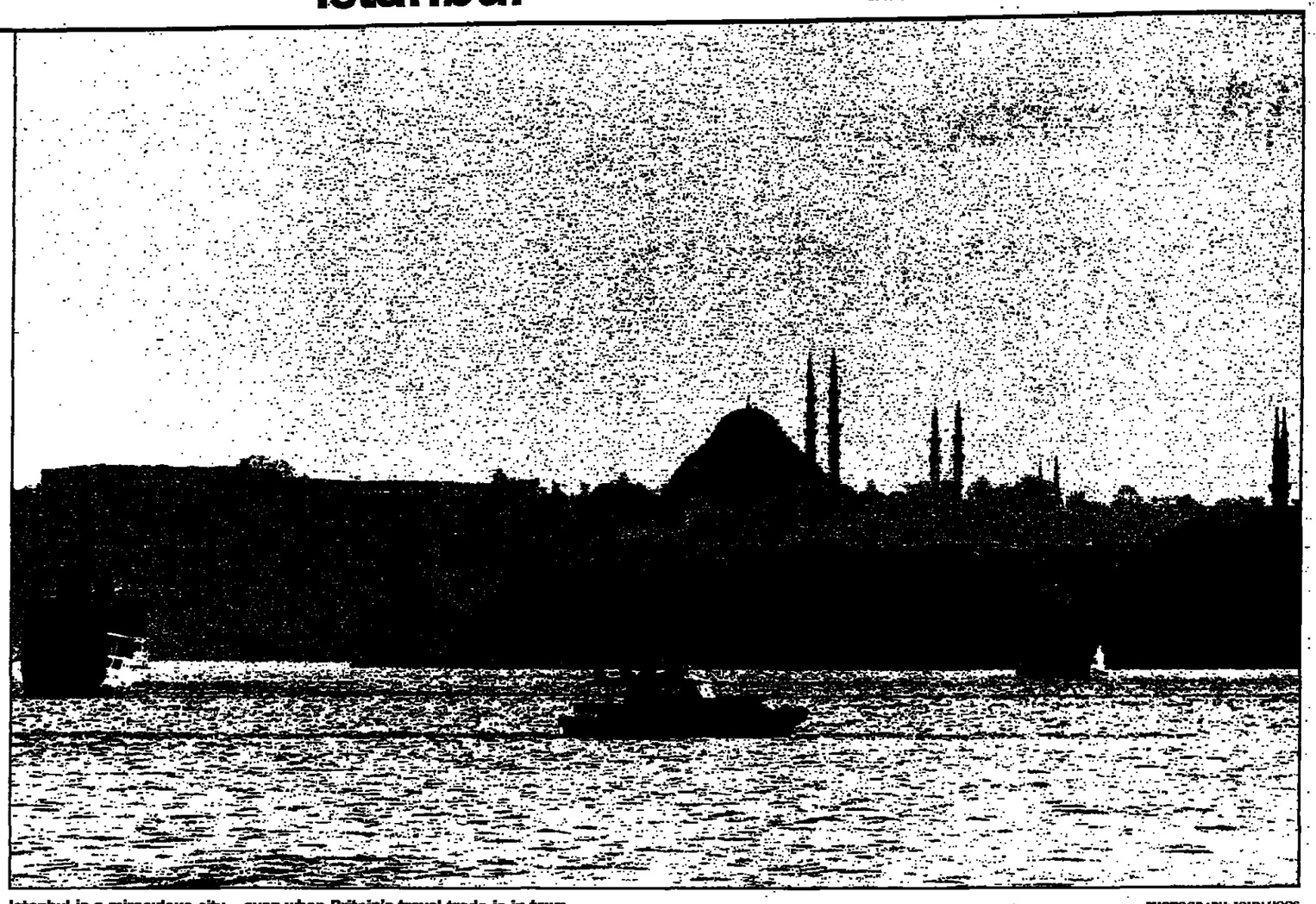
Journalism provided some ideas. Mike Polkey of London suggests: "An Outward Bound-style corporate morale-boosting weekend on Dartmoor in February with the editorial board of the *Daily Mail*," while Carl Pendle of Chichester headlines his entry "Dismal trip with Simon Calder competition" and offers "A ride with ... on a dune buggy at Pismo beach in California", suggesting another travel journalist who will remain nameless.

Those who suggested European trips fell into two broad categories: gloaters and masochists. Among the former were Kevin McNamara of County Down – "A first-class plane ticket to Berlin, a stay in a five-star hotel and the opportunity to meet the 'winners' and gloat" – and Annie McStay of Falmouth: "Travel in flash white Porsche. Chunnel it; streak across northern Europe, no hitchers, to Berlin. Arrive at the Hotel Unter den Linden for cocktails".

The masochistic tendency included Richard Marshall of south London ("A pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in Spain. Fly to Bilbao, walk 300 miles on your knees, sleep rough. Flagellation optional") and David Dunlop of Hastings: "To make the same journey in the back seat of a Trabant, complete with an 'Eat British Beef' sticker in the rear window".

By now the field was thinning out, and after much mulling and sifting I was left with just three. Alison Clements of Maidstone, who recommends "A day's rafting down Sweden's Klarelven River, then a folk-dancing display and an unsuccessful moose hunt. I've done it"; Sue Bedry of Glasgow – "A tour of Poland's railways on a self-propelled track trolley" – and Toby Smith of Leatherhead: "A midwinter tour of Lincolnshire by Sinclair C5".

The clincher in Ms Clements"s favour was that it is her birthday on 9 November, when (all being well, which it probably won't be) we should be in Berlin. Everyone else just gets a card of commiseration from me – and, almost certainly, a better weekend than Ms Clements and me. You will be able to find out how awful it was on 16 November.


Istanbul is a miraculous city – even when Britain's travel trade is in town PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN VOOS

An overbooking of travel agents

Simon Calder attends the travel industry's get-together in Istanbul

"A bit like an Open University Summer School, then?" I ventured, a trifle nervously. The veteran of numerous Abta conventions, who had been regaling me with tales of drunken debauchery at previous travel industry get-togethers, nodded. "That's exactly right".

By the end of the farewell party on Monday night, I shall be able to confirm or refute any similarity to the notorious "Last Chance Disco" beloved of OU undergraduates. But I arrived in this great city an Abta virgin.

It all started in Brighton, in 1951. As the Festival of Britain took the nation into the second half of the 20th century, the year-old Association of British Travel Agents decided that it should instigate an annual event for members to meet and discuss matters of mutual concern and interest – in other words, network. The first 20 Abta conventions were firmly UK-based, matching the predominance of holidays for British tourists: the 1960 event, aboard SS *Oriana*, and a couple of excursions to Dublin was as exotic as it got.

Then, in 1970, a minor revolution: a foreign venue. The unusual choice was Rotterdam, neither then nor now a celebrated tourist haunt. But from then on, the Abta convention became as much a matter of "where can we go next?" as "what's on the agenda".

Eight hundred members of the Association, which includes almost all travel agents and tour operators, have paid £300-500 each to attend the event, including reduced-rate air fares and hotel accommodation.

Journalists fare even better: most arrived on the Air 2000 flight in which the normal charter configuration was replaced by luxury leather armchairs, and are staying free-of-charge in the Hilton, courtesy of the Turkish government. As a representative of the *Independent* I am not paying to attend the business sessions at the convention. But in accordance with newspaper's policy of paying its own way, and meeting the challenge of finding the most cost-effective route, my bicycle and I had an unusual journey by air first to Stuttgart, thence to Thessaloniki, followed by a variety of vehicles across the border before finally pedalling into Istanbul late on Thursday. I am writing from the Ottoman Guest House around the corner from the Blue Mosque, £15 a night and very nice too.

Turkey's largest city was a safe choice after last year's convention. The 1995 venue was Sun City, near Johannesburg. Only half the predicted numbers turned up. Most members thought it too far to go, especially after what turned out to be a dismal summer for the industry.

Istanbul has proved more of an attraction, which is a good thing since there is a lot of serious work to be done. The event coincides with a crucial moment in the British travel trade. Is it going to tackle the 21st century by adopting properly professional principles befitting a big, growing and rapidly diversifying industry? Or will it continue to lurch from one crisis to the next, booming and busting in such quick succession that the customer can't tell whether that £99 deal is a last-minute giveaway or a come-on for early bookers.

Some of the travelling public at Heathrow this week probably regarded the hordes of travel agents heading east merely as an irrelevance or inconvenience. (Incidentally, what is the collective noun for travel agents; an overbooking, perhaps?) But the decisions and deals made here will have repercussions for holidaymakers – and those who work in travel.

The travel trade so often presents its public image as a parochial muddle. In Travel Weekly a fortnight ago, the respected analyst Bruce Jones reflected wearily on a profits warning by a large tour operator: "It reminds the City of how we used to view holiday companies. They were always regarded as a low-grade, punting stock." Yet this conceals an extremely important industry: at least 5.5 per cent of Gross Domestic Product, says the British Tourist Authority, double that according to the World Travel and Tourism Council.

Interestingly, the present government has not seen fit to send any representatives. But the Labour Party has despatched both Nigel Griffith MP (unkindly referred to by one delegate yesterday as a "travel industry groupie") and Jack Cunningham, the shadow Heritage Secretary.

Some, no doubt, will miss Dr Cunningham's presentation "New Labour – Nothing to Fear" in favour of doing some deals. Abta is a strange sort of trade association, representing both the tour operators and the High Street travel agents. An equivalent might be the music industry inviting the manager of every branch of Our Price to Cannes for its annual junket. But this means there are plenty of opportunities for networking with other agents, airlines and operators. Not forgetting journalists.

If I wished, I could have started yesterday with the Big Eurostar Breakfast; progressed to the Sun-Tours "afternoon to remember" (lunch, Bosporus cruise with "time for photographs and liquid refreshment", afternoon tea); staggered on to the First Timer's party sponsored by American Express; and finished up at the Swissotel Welcome Party. But, as I have to keep reminding myself, Istanbul is a miraculous city of seven million intriguing sould, even when Britain's travel trade is in town. Once the official business sessions are over, Asia meets Europe strikes me as more intriguing than Airtours meets Thomson. But maybe I'll check out that farewell party.

Finally, a trade secret that those with a friend, lover or colleague at the Abta convention should be in on. You may get a postcard from him or her that reassures you that you are uppermost in their thoughts – after all, they went to all that trouble to get the card and stamp. You should know that the conference pack each delegate receives includes, courtesy of Cresta, a pre-stamped postcard. Perhaps that's an idea the Open University should pick up.

Along the Bosporus

Visiting Istanbul without taking a trip along the Bosporus is unthinkable. The 30-kilometre strait links the Marmara and Black Seas and well over 200 ferry crossings are made every day between the Asian and European sides, and across the Golden Horn.

Aboard M/S Caner Gonyeli, we moved away from the sprawl of Taksim into the main strait. After 15 minutes, we docked close to the 19th-century Dolmabahçe Palace. Here Kemal Atatürk – Turkey's first president and all-round cult hero – died of cirrhosis of the liver in 1938.

After a short time we departed for the Asian side and docked at Kanlica, with its lively mix of old wooden houses and gaudy new buildings lying close to the water line. Another short trip and another quick stop at Yeniköy on the European side. Then, after a fleeting docking at Sariyer, we proceeded to Kavagi. Here, a tiny fortress rose behind the sprawling buildings, overshadowed by a huge pylon.

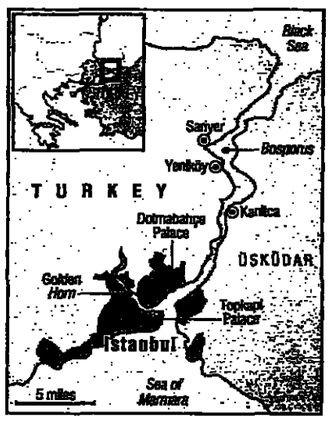
We made our last stop on the Asian side in the shadow of a Genoese castle high on the hill. After our two-hour trip, we were awarded two hours to explore. We stepped into an area of cafés dominated by massive plane trees. A man tried to sell a meal by holding up a skewer of prawns and a fillet of plaice.

Skirting such eating opportunities, I set out to explore. I passed a small mosque with dark green graves, each topped with a turban or a fez. Beyond was a narrow, cobbled road lined with quaint houses. A small girl done up in pink came up to say hello. Behind her, an old lady in a bulging velvet skirt and headdress looked on with matriarchal displeasure. Cows grazed among scattered rubbish sacks; up a bank, a pile of coal had been stashed inside a fence bordering a block of flats. A trio of Italian tourists in Armani suits wandered past – a sudden contrast to this impoverished scene.

I rounded a corner into a breathtaking view. Far in the distance, a two-mile bay signalled the end of the Bosporus and the start of the Black Sea. Only a lighthouse, isolated on the point, lay between me and the Russian coastline.

Our trip back was magnificent: we sailed into a reddening sunset that threw the domes and minarets of the Topkapi Palace and the Hagia Sophia into relief. It was all too soon that we reached the modern mayhem that is Istanbul.

Mark Dudley



Where Europe meets the Orient

Frances Cairncross spends a long weekend in a city of minarets, mayhem – and infinite pleasures

It was the final evening that really brought it home to us. There we were, at a table in the Flower Passage, a covered market which is now full of small restaurants. As we ate our meze, the owner performed the normal evening ritual of Istanbul restaurateurs in the touristy areas: importuning passing foreigners in whatever he guessed was the right language. A couple of men were persuaded and waved to the far end of our table. There, to our astonishment, was Bruno, my brother's best friend, with a travelling companion who also knew my brother.

But the coincidence, we all decided, was perhaps not really so amazing. They were having a weekend break on Air Miles, and so were we. Istanbul is about the right distance from London – a three-hour flight; most business travellers could expect to tot up the miles within a year; and the flights are empty enough for seats to be fairly available. On top of which, it is a city of infinite pleasures for the tourist.

First, it is big: by far the largest city in Europe (or rather, partly in Europe), with a population of 15m. That means tourists can fairly easily be swallowed into the city's ordinary life. Next, it is inexpensive: when the woman in the foreign exchange booth at Heathrow began to count, "10 million, 20 million, 30 million", it was clear this was a country with an impressively rampant inflation problem.

Then again, it manages to be beautiful, even after 40 years of hideous redevelopment. Not only is it built on hills, but a vast area of water stretches through the midst of the city. Asia is sliced from Europe by the Bosporus; and the European side, in turn, is split by the waters of the Golden Horn. The result is bridges and ferries, and long uninterrupted views of domes and minarets.

We had taken a ferry, earlier that day, up the Bosporus, towards the mouth of the Black Sea. We passed vast tankers, painted with "No Smoking" notices in prudently large letters: a reminder that this is the only outlet for the region's oil and gas to the Mediterranean. We cruised under the new Bosporus bridge, built more or less on the spot where Darius, king of Persia, led his army across the strait on a bridge of boats to hound the Scythians. As we went from port to port, the boat became a sort of floating emporium, with salesmen hawking watches and guidebooks and sweets. We docked briefly at the little suburb of Kanlica, famed for its yoghurt: predictably, a man loaded with yoghurt pots clambered aboard and toured the ship, selling his wares.

The city's most extraordinary quality, though, is the antiquity of its buildings and the intermingling of Roman, Christian and Ottoman cultures. Immense monuments survive from the days when this was Constantinople, capital of the Roman Empire. Haghia Sophia, a vast Christian basilica run up in under five years by the emperor Justinian in the middle of the 6th century, set the pattern with its domes and minarets for the city's mosques once the Ottomans took it over a millennium later. Its huge dome soars as high as a 15-storey building. John Julius Norwich's history, *Byzantium*, records that to contemporary historians it was the eighth wonder of the world, standing among other buildings "like a huge ship anchored anchored among them", with its dome seemingly "suspended from heaven by a golden chain".

A century before that phenomenal feat of engineering, Theodosius, an earlier emperor, had run a seven-mile wall around the landward side of the city. Great swathes of its gigantic battlements and watchtowers are still in place. We walked its length one afternoon, squelching down muddy lanes in some places, trekking along the outer ring road in others. In the poor, urban villages that crowd up against the inner edge of the wall, nobody begged from us or tried to mug us. We met no other tourists.

They all seem to be in the Covered Market and at Topkapi Sarayi, the palace of the Ottoman sultans. After the Ottomans captured Constantinople in the 15th century, they set about building themselves the last word in splendour. Most of the tourists make straight for the harem, where we joined a queue for tickets behind a valiant Turkish woman guide, who was attempting to deliver a dose of straight history to a group of guffawing Scandinavians.

As a way of running an empire, it would be hard to devise a worse system. Grand viziers were lopped so frequently that the chief executioner doubled up as head gardener – to be handily on the spot, not doubt. The viziers had to contend with rival political advice from squads of concubines, whose qualifications as Caucasian Christian slaves hardly sound right for the job. All those concubines had another politically disruptive effect: the sheer numbers of potential heirs to the throne guaranteed enough family strife and carnage to make even the Scottish medieval court sound like a haven of tranquillity.

From this mayhem, we retreated that evening to Turkey's most soothing pastime. The Turkish bath in Pera, round the corner from our hotel, offered an evening identical to one described by Thackeray early in the 19th century. Like him, we lolled on a sort of ceramic hob, in "a soft boiling simmer, which, no doubt, potatoes feel when they are steaming". Well simmered, we were massaged by a hefty figure wielding "a quantity of lather, in the midst of which is something like old Miss McWhirter's flaxen wig that she is so proud of," and emerged agreeing that "you little knew what saponicity was till you entered a Turkish bath".

Strolling back towards the Flower Market for that final dinner, we felt like millionaires (which, thanks to Turkish inflation, we temporarily were). We were purified and refreshed, languorous and lazy, exercised and cultured. Not many capital cities within weekending distance from London would offer such a rich mix of the exotic and the historic – and leave you as clean as a freshly boiled potato, too.

Turkish facts

Getting there: Turkish Airlines (0171-499 4499) has a fare of £193 including tax from Heathrow to Istanbul. A cheaper alternative is from Gatwick on Azerbaijan Airlines (0171-439 2281), for £156 including, but the carrier has only one flight each week – on Tuesdays.

Getting in: British passport holders are required to pay £10 for a Turkish visa upon arrival.

More information: available from the Turkish Tourist Information Centre, 1st Floor, 170 Piccadilly, London W1V 9DD (0171-629 7771)

Istanbul's thriving Covered Market PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN VOOS

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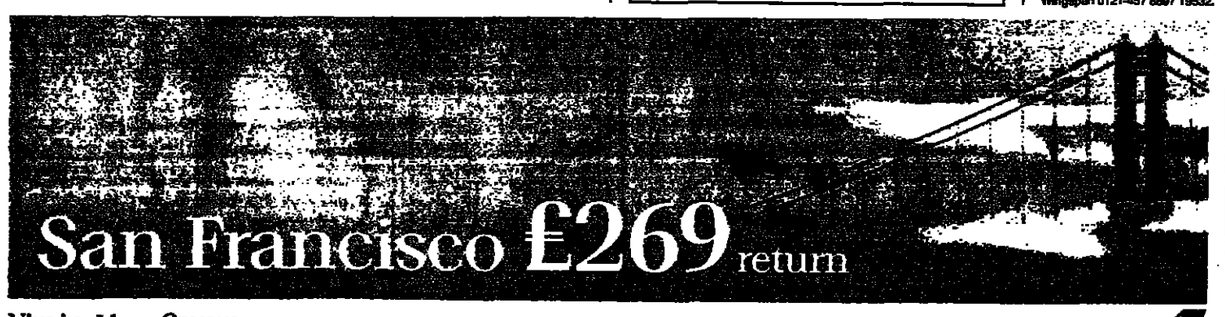

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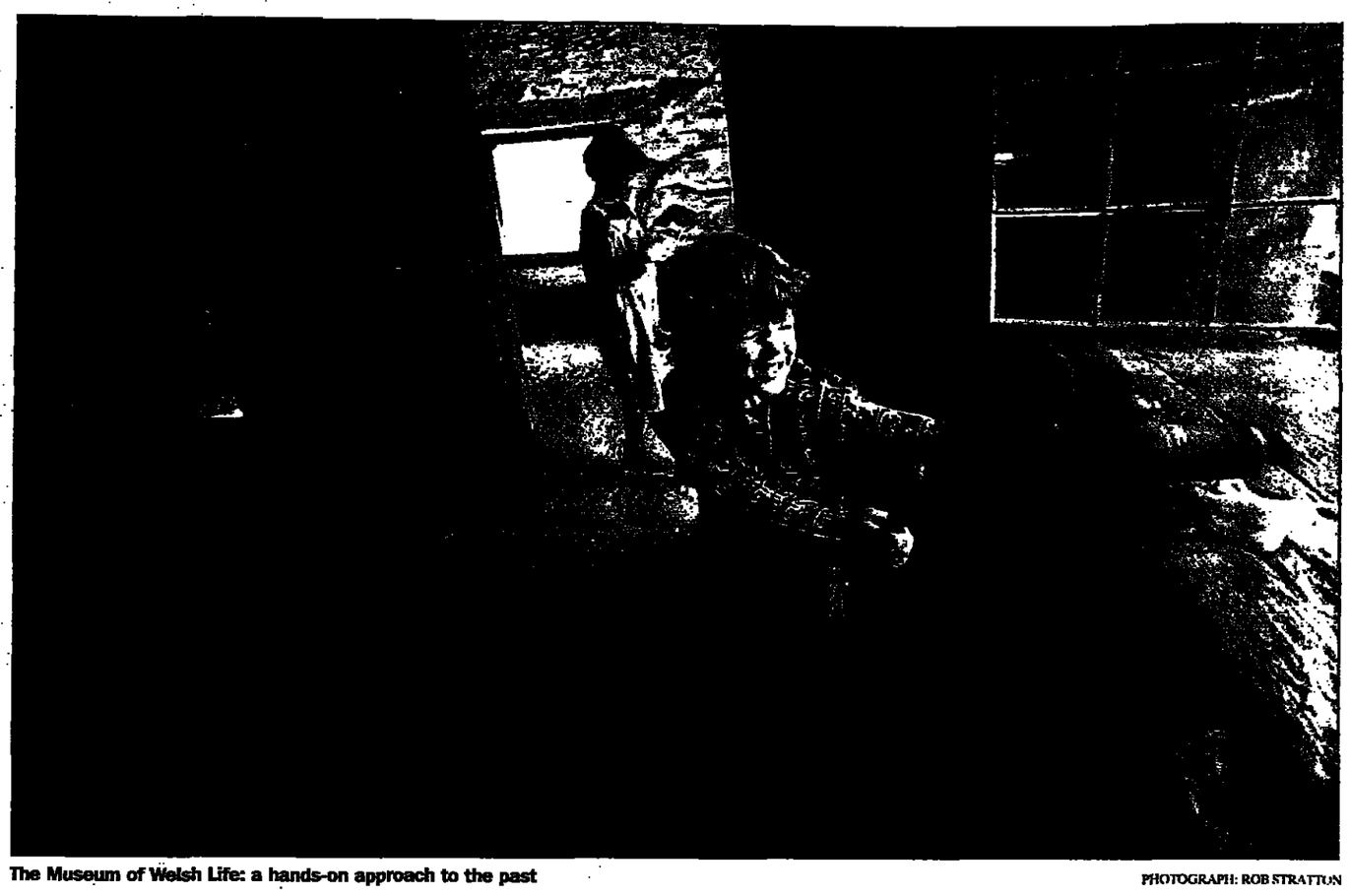
Centuries of living in Wales

The Cunninghams take on the Museum of Welsh Life. By Catherine Stebbings

At the open-air Museum of Welsh Life, at St Fagan's near Cardiff, there's a hands-on approach to the past. More than 30 buildings have been removed from all over Wales and re-erected to show how people have lived, worked and played over the centuries.

The museum is set in the extensive grounds of St Fagan's Castle, an elegant Elizabethan mansion built on the site of its wooden namesake. The castle has a formal garden complete with topiary, mulberry grove, rose garden, medicinal herb collection, terraces and fishponds. Beyond this lies an amazingly eclectic collection of vernacular architecture, each building recording an instant of Welsh history: a cold, windswept cock-fighting pit, which in its day would have been crowded with beer-swigging gamblers; a bright little Unitarian chapel; a dark farmhouse lit solely by the crackling fire; a Victorian school; a local store smelling of coffee beans; and the stark, highly polished Miners' Institute recently brought here from a street in Oakdale.

Although this is essentially an outdoor museum, on a rainy day there is plenty to see in the indoor galleries. Everything Welsh is explored: farming, music, mining, medicine, cooking, corn dollies.



The Museum of Welsh Life: a hands-on approach to the past

PHOTOGRAPH: ROB STRATTON

The visitors

Richard Cunningham, ordinand and consultant to university Christian Unions, and his wife Ruth, took their children, Nicole, nine, Ashley, six, and Jack, one.

Ashley: It was exciting, it was good fun and I learnt a lot about the way people used to live. My favourite place was the Celtic village where there were wild boar feeding just next to the ditch around the village. I also liked the white farmhouse where the goose scared all of us except me.

The castle was my best house, with all those rooms and secret places. It was very big and the kitchen was really good. In those days they cooked over the big fire and they read by candlelight. I would prefer to turn the light on.

Nicole: I liked the red house most. It was painted red to keep the evil spirits away. It was very old-fashioned. Inside it was very dark but I thought the kitchen was a cheerful room and made the rest of the house seem less gloomy. There was a nice fire burning. I would only want to live there if it had electric light, because I like to read. I suppose I could have read by candlelight and listened to the mice and the birds nesting in the straw of the roof above.

I didn't like the Celtic village. The small, round houses were completely dark. I could hardly see a thing. Inside I was stumbling through the blackness and there was mud everywhere. If they had lit the fire in the middle the whole place would have been full of smoke and very smelly. It's just not a very nice place to live, but I suppose that is the type of thing you would expect for 2000 years ago.

It was interesting to see how other people, the rich and the poor, would have lived. I suppose they would have been used to it so they wouldn't have minded living like that. I am very glad I live now.

Richard: This was a great day out because the whole thing was so highly structured that we didn't have to inject too much as parents. The children enjoyed following the route in the guidebook, which was also clearly signposted. Around every corner the children could dive into something new, whether it was a pigsty, a worker's cottage, a toll house or a sawmill.

The notice-boards at each site were good for a quick overview but the costumed staff working at each site were terrific. Ashley was interested in the clothes in the tailor's shop so the man opened a drawer, showed him some clothes and measured him for a suit. Nicole was interested in the war coupons, so he explained the quota system to her and told her it would cost her two-thirds of her annual quota for a winter coat. The guide had lived through the Second World War so he was part of the social history himself.

Ruth: I thought this was a good way of learning. It was suitable for all ages; even my grandparents would enjoy it.

I enjoyed seeing how the different buildings related to one another; the tailor's shop, ironmonger's works, school, chapel, the saw mill and the workers union all gave the place a sense of community as well as putting each other in a historical context.

The deal

Location: The Museum of Welsh Life (01222 569441) is four miles west of Cardiff off the A4232, 3 miles from junction 33 of the M4.

Access: The large car park at the entrance includes bays for the disabled. Access on good paths around the open-air museum is on foot only. Much of the museum is level, but there is a steep climb at the castle end. The site is large, so be prepared to walk a fair distance if you wish to see both the castle and the majority of sites. Opening times: Daily, 10am-5pm (1 Oct-30 June), 10am-6pm (1 July-30 Sept). Closed 24 and 25 Dec.

Admission: November-Easter: Adults, £4; OAPS, Students, UB40s, £3; Children (five to 15) £2: Under-fives free. Family day ticket based on two adults and two children, £10. Easter-October. Adults £5; Concession £3.75; Children £2.50; Family £12.50. Dogs are allowed on a lead but not inside the houses or the Visitor Centre. Guidebook (£1.50) is well worth having. Tactile map and Braille worksheets for the visually handicapped.

Food: The self-service Museum Restaurant offers hot and cold meals. Welsh specialities include faggots, steak in ale £4.25. Children's meals £1.95. The Gwalia Tea Rooms, above the Gwalia Stores in the middle of the park, serve 26 different varieties of tea with traditional cakes; hot and cold snacks include soup and roll, £2.25; lasagne, £3.25. Fresh bread and cakes are also sold on the site at the Turog Bakery.

Attractions: Excellent playground for 4-14 year olds. Throw a pot at the pottery under expert supervision, £1.40. Horse-and-cart rides from Cilewent Farmhouse, Adults £1.50, Children 50p.

Events: Christmas tree, carols, storytelling, craft stalls: first week in December, three evenings, and all day Saturday.

Shops: The shop in the main building sells postcards, craft souvenirs, books, films etc. The Gwalia Stores sells similar goods. The craftspeople working on site at the castle – cooper, clog maker, wood turner – often have items for sale.

Toilets: five separate sites, including two for disabled. Baby-changing facilities.

Are we nearly there?

A weekly round-up of events for children

Parents can celebrate Guy Fawkes with their children from today into next week. Explosive evenings include steam railways and night-time trips to theme parks. There are more events than you can shake a sparkler at, so get in touch with your local authority if there's nothing here near you.

Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumbria
1,000 guys will be consigned to the flames. Live music, lasers and children's entertainment. Spittal Point, 6pm-9pm. **Tomorrow**

Bishop Auckland, Durham
Fireworks are themed around Euro '96 and the Olympics and set to various sporting theme tunes. Town Recreation Ground, Bob Hardisty Drive, starts 6.30pm, fireworks 7.30pm **Monday, 4 November**

Embsay, North Yorkshire
At the Embsay and Bolton Abbey Steam Railway, trains run 5.30pm-8pm, each journey lasting about 40 minutes. Bonfire's lit at 7pm, fireworks at 7.15pm. Adults £3.50, children £1.70 including train ride. Embsay Station, North Yorkshire **Tonight**

Alton Towers, Staffordshire
Work through 125 rides, then enjoy a free firework show themed around the historic towers, while shooting The Rapids. Alton Towers Theme Park, Alton, Staffordshire (01538 702200). Full day £17.50/£13.50, after 3pm half price. Fireworks start 6pm, rides open until 8pm. **Tonight and tomorrow**

Brentwood, Essex
Spend a bombastic bonfire night with music from *The War of the Worlds*. Live bands and dancing, a funfair and food. Gates open 5pm, fireworks 8pm-10.30pm Adults £3, children £1.50. (Before 6.30pm, up to four children under 12 with adults admitted free). Brentwood Centre, Doddinghurst Road, Brentwood, Essex. **Tonight**

Weymouth, Dorset
All-day firework festival includes fairground rides, a barbecue and Guy Fawkes competition for children. In the evening a giant fire will be lit. The beach, Weymouth, Dorset 12pm-10pm. **Tomorrow**

London
The annual Bonfire Night at Ally Pally is justly famous. Live music in the Palm Court and a children's fun fair in the Great Hall. Alexandra Palace, north London, from 7.30pm. **Tonight**

Liese Spencer

Fireworks and fancy dress

Bridgwater's brilliant Guy Fawkes celebrations. By Brigid McConville

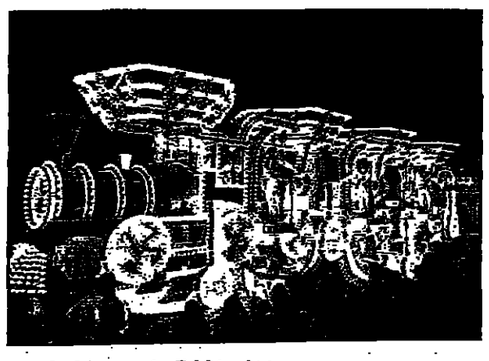
How has it come to pass that a small town in Somerset is home to the biggest illuminated carnival procession in the world? Perhaps because the brains behind the Gunpowder Plot was a local man: it should be "Robert Persons Night", not Guy Fawkes Night, though the staunchly Protestant West Country population were never too keen to lay claim to this subversive Jesuit priest.

Indeed, while the rest of the country went on burning papist effigies or rolling blazing tar barrels, Bridgwater people transformed the same tradition into a modern spectacular of light and sound that now attracts 100,000-plus spectators a year, and which locals claim is second only to the Rio Carnival.

We've lived here for 11 years and each year we weakly threaten our children that we may give it a miss. But we've never yet done so – and never regretted it, either. The Bridgwater Carnival, love it or hate it, is unique.

For two hours, a two-mile-long procession of tractor-drawn floats winds at walking pace through this market town. The biggest floats are 100ft long, brilliantly illuminated by up to 20,000 light bulbs. Most of them belt out deafening music, while carnivalites in fancy dress endlessly repeat a dance routine. At intervals a "walking entry", or push-cart, suggests how things used to be before the procession went hi-tech.

And the themes of the floats are chosen as if political correctness had not yet reached the West Country. Inevitably, there are hairy men in drag with balloons up their jumpers, and never a carnival goes by without a cart on a "jungle" theme with blacked up people brandishing spears. Blokes in nappies sucking on dummies is another recurrent motif – and often two or more floats have the same music. ("Tiger Feet" and "La Bamba" are perennial favourites).



Carnival comes to Bridgwater

Sometimes it's hard to believe you are in the middle of Somerset as Spanish-American, Egyptian – you name it – themes follow each other through the town. One minute you are looking at The Matadors with a dozen men in bullfighting outfits stepping out to "Viva España"; next it's the Boy Pharoah on a gilded throne surrounded by swarthy slaves.

Only these are all homogenised by modern carnival tradition into sub-Disney ciphers. By necessity there is a lot of nylon and plastic; by definition there is a strong show-biz flavour. You can look at it all as fantastically naff, American-influenced and derivative; or you can be awestruck by the sheer effort, creativity and commitment of the people who have worked all year to put this show together.

And make no mistake, half the town is involved. The carnival clubs, often attached to local pubs, spend all year running fêtes, raffles, dances and concerts to raise the £10,000-plus it takes to create a float. They do so partly because they love it, and partly to raise money for charity. This year Bridgwater College launched an NVQ in carnival skills (Certificate of Performance Art).

Often there is some ghastly, drink-related accident during carnival fortnight. Since we've been here there have been several deaths involving people falling off floats and getting run over. One year, a tableaux float (on which participants have to keep absolutely still) depicted the crucifixion. A local GP told us that the man playing Jesus came close to death, after two hours on th cross on a freezing November night.

The night culminates in the "squibbing" in Bridgwater High Street, when 100 carnivalites line up, each with a huge firework on the end of a pole. These are lit simultaneously, filling the High Street to its rooftops with huge eruptions of white sparks.

After the squibbing, the crowds wait outside the Town Hall for the judges' verdicts on this year's entries. "Black Friday" follows – named for the quality of the hangovers – and for many of the next 10 nights the carnivalites get back into their costumes to tour the neighbouring towns.

With many local friends, we tend to wait till the Saturday when the carnival goes through North Petherton, a few miles south of Bridgwater. As we walk across fields towards the start of the carnival we get a backstage view of the floats preparing for action.

Under immense kilowattage, the nervous spacemen and spear-chuckers practise their steps on the pavement. There is always one float condemned to last-minute generator failure, but these sad, darkened hulks get as much applause as any other – because the show must go on.

Not at all what Father Robert Persons and his cronies had in mind.

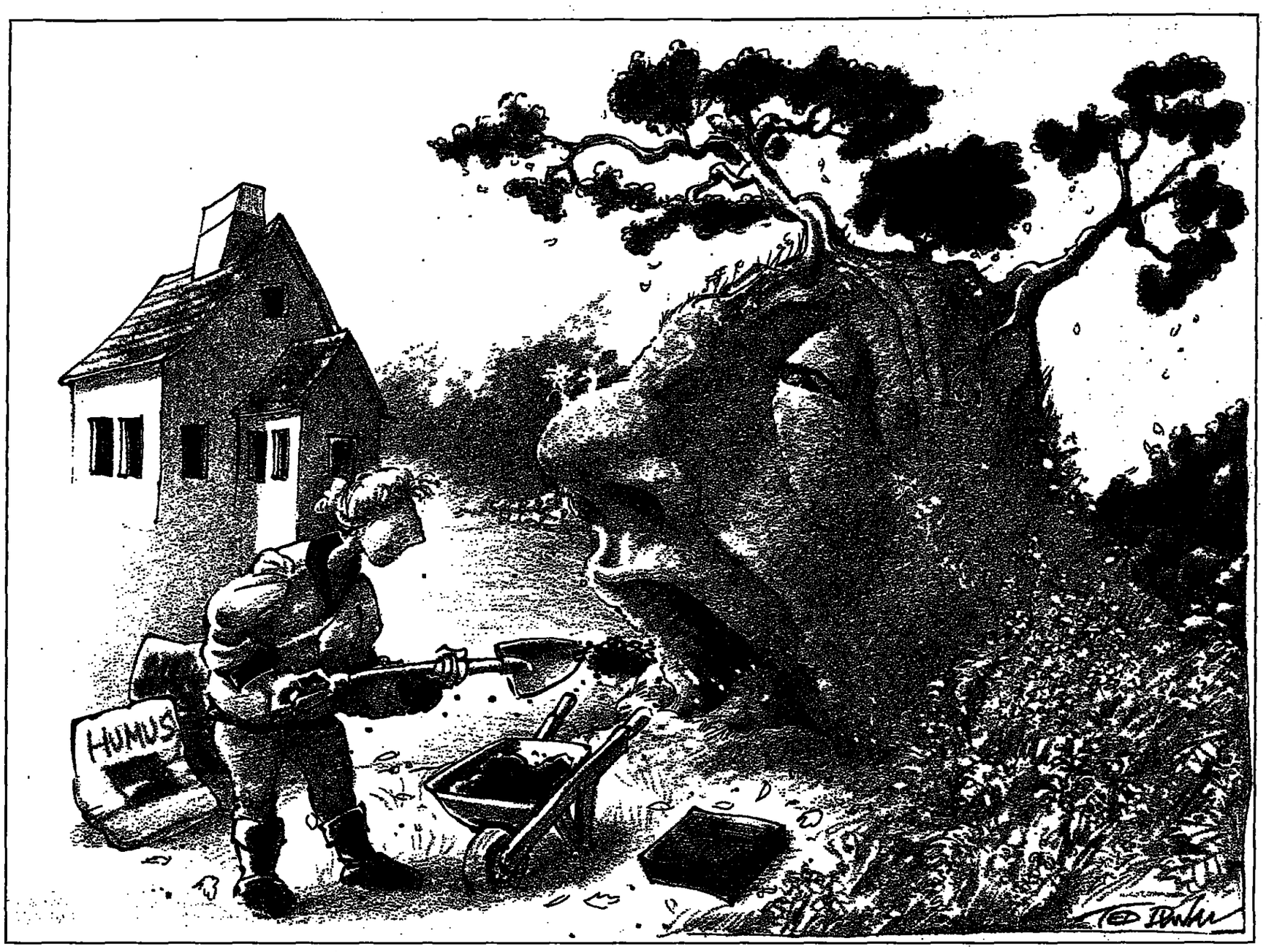
How to get there: Public transport: train to Bridgwater avoids pressure on parking spaces. Police close roads through the town at 6.30pm; the procession starts at at 7.15pm.

When to go: Thursday is Bridgwater Carnival day. The following Saturday it moves to North Petherton; Monday to Burnham-on-Sea; Wednesday to Shepton Mallet; Friday to Wells; Saturday to Glastonbury; Monday to Weston-super-Mare.

Details from Chris Hocking (01278 429288).

Cherishing Mother Earth

In the first of a monthly series on gardening principles, Anna Pavord advises on care of the soil



Soil isn't sexy. It's sad but it's true. Gardeners may sigh over their salvias and worship their wisterias, but soil they take for granted. In gardening books you can bet that any chapter on soil will be illustrated with a hefty boot doing impossibly tiring things with a spade. I sympathise with readers who may already be turning away in droves from this column, fearing that it will all be about double digging, bastard trenching and the like.

I have the same problem with anything to do with DIY. All those instructions about preparing walls before you paper may be music to some ears. Not mine. I'm only interested in the final effect. But soil is different. It is a living thing, to be treated with consideration and respect. It is not inexhaustible. It gets tired and hungry and sick. If it only ever gets chemical medicines chucked at it, it turns into a kind of addict, able to function only with stronger and stronger doses of drugs.

Soil is a mixture of bits of rock, water and organic matter. Sandy soils are made from relatively large bits of rock, clay soils from small particles. One is called light, the other heavy. Success in gardening lies in getting the right balance between the two, the right structure. For that, you need the proper ratio between earth crumbs and air pockets. On heavy clay soils, there is not enough air. Plant roots keep bumping their noses on the underground equivalent of brick walls. On light, sandy soils, there is too much air, and the fine, hairy rootlets that absorb nutrients are unable to clutch at what they need.

Between the two is a perfect soil. This is the fabled loam, and you can magic it into being by adding humus to your soil at every opportunity. The easy way is by mulching heavily over the surface of the soil, leaving the earthworms to drag the humus underground. Humus opens up heavy soils and adds bulk to light ones.

In natural habitats, soil is replenished with a litter of dying vegetation and animal droppings, gradually pulled down into the earth by worms and insects. The garden, though, is an unnatural habitat, where we whisk away dying vegetation like dirty coffee mugs from the sitting room. That's why gardeners have to compensate by blanketing their plots with compost. Anything bulky and organic will do: mushroom compost, spent hops, home-made compost, farmyard manure.

In town gardens, where there is often no access from front to back garden except through the house, this is easier said than done. But done it must be. You do not expect a building to last unless it has decent foundations. The same goes for plants. If the roots are happy, the rest of the plant will mostly take care of itself.

Plant roots need passages along which they can run and from which they can absorb the nutrients necessary for healthy growth. Humus helps create these vital passages. Chemical fertilisers don't.

The minerals that plants need for healthy growth, generally lumped together under the heading "trace elements", include boron, copper, iron, manganese and zinc. In fertile soils, they are present naturally, but lack of them shows up in plant deficiency diseases. Organic animal manures are rich in trace elements and if you use these regularly, you are unlikely to have problems. Magnesium deficiency (leaves turn brown and wither) is more prevalent on acid soils than alkaline ones. Chlorosis is more likely on limy soils: leaves that should be bright, pulsating green turn a pallid, sickly yellow. The plant cannot absorb the minerals it needs from the soil because they are locked up by too much lime.

Acid and alkaline are terms that apply to the pH (the potential of hydrogen) in the soil. The pH scale runs from 1 to 14 with neutral somewhere in the middle. Above that dividing line, soils are said to be alkaline, below it, acid. Most vegetables grow best in slightly alkaline soil. Rhododendrons need acid soil, between 4.5 and 6 on the pH scale. Kits, with all the charm of toy chemistry sets, are available to tell you whether you have one or the other. Happy gardeners go with the flow and grow plants that like their soil.

Megalomaniacs find this a difficult precept to accept. They dig pits in their gardens and fill them with a different kind of soil, hoping to hoodwink plants into believing that everything is as it should be. For a while, this works. But gradually, the soil's true constituents leach into the pretend patch and take it over. Or the plant's roots wander outside the cordon sanitaire and choke on the unfamiliar food. And there is nothing more miserable in a garden than a rhododendron panting in a sea of lime for its fix of acid.

Prepare beds for planting during autumn, winter and early spring, working only when the soil is dry enough not to stick to the soles of your boots. On heavy ground, you need to dig, to throw up clods of earth so that they can get broken up by frost (you soon learn in gardening not to do jobs that others, such as frost and worms, can do for you). You also dig to get air into compacted soil and to bury weeds or other organic material.

But digging no longer has the heroic status it once had – along with bastard trenching and double digging, which is twice as back-breaking as the ordinary kind. Only for masochists does digging now loom large in the gardening calendar. On light soils, you can often get away with not digging at all.

Heavy ground, or places which have been used as throughways, need more attention. Digging improves drainage and introduces air into hard-packed earth. Heavy clay soils should be dug at the beginning of winter, light soils as late as possible in spring. Light soils do not need to be broken down by frost. The main problem here is hanging on to water and nutrients. By leaving a light soil firm over winter, you help it to hold water.

If you are making a new bed on light, sandy soil, you can kill off the weeds with a non-residual weedkiller, mulch it heavily and then plant direct into the ground. Mulches break down into humus at different rates, depending on what they are made of. Leaves of ash and apple disappear quickly. Leaves that contain resins, such as pine needles, or have waxy finishes, such as holly, break down slowly.

The rate of breakdown depends on the ratio of carbon to nitrogen in the living plant. Grass has a low carbon to nitrogen ratio, about 5 to 1, and so breaks down fast in the soil. In pine needles, the ratio is about 100 to 1, so deterioration is much slower. In the autumn, a mature tree will provide at least 5lb of leaf litter for each square yard of ground under it. That's nature's way of conditioning and feeding the soil. Match it if you can.

cuttings

"For nearly 20 years we have enjoyed the delicate winter blossom of our *Prunus subhirtella* 'Autumnalis'," writes Madeleine Beaufoy of Keighley, West Yorkshire. "The tree is at a focal point in the front garden, encouraged to fork low so that its five main branches are visible from the lower windows and front door, while marking a curve of the drive and steps to the house.

"Now this much-loved tree is so wide that the branches are drooping, making it difficult to mow the lawn. We also have to park the car strategically. The time has come for rejuvenation.

"Our pruning of under-branches has allowed the tree to extend upwards and outwards (it is approximately 30ft wide by 20ft high), concentrating the growth towards the branch ends – hence the weight. There are no small branches to prune back to. If we prune the branches back to the trunk, we shall lose the shape we have so carefully encouraged. If we shorten the branches and top the leader by half, will we not be faced with bundles of brittle, unviable twigs or stumps?

"The tree canopy looks full and healthy, but inspection shows a good deal of dead wood inside: twigs that have died back, maybe from lack of light. The tree's habit, in fact, seems to be to form new growth at the branch extremities, self-pruning as it goes.

"Can we rejuvenate and reduce this tree by careful pruning? If so, when and how?"

Mrs Beaufoy spells out in her letter several alternative ways of dealing with her cherry. I think that to barber it all round would be the worst option. Nothing of its graceful habit would be retained, and such treatment will probably encourage bottle-brush growth which will never come to anything worthwhile.

If the tree were mine, and I felt I had to act, I would take a deep breath and take off a couple of the lowest branches entirely. This is drastic, but it would help with the mowing and parking problems and reduce the spread of the tree. This, from what Mrs Beaufoy says, seems to be causing more difficulties than its height.

It seems to me that this is the only way to retain any of the tree's natural growth habit, though Mrs Beaufoy will lose the view of the lower branches that she mentions in her letter.

There is, of course, a risk that the tree, sensing free air and space below, may put out some side branches to fill the gap.

The dead twigs are not unusual in prunus, which as a family are strongly inclined to grow from the tips of the branches. Pruning, though, should be looked on as very much a last resort. Cherries don't respond well to it. If pruning has to be done, it should be carried out in late summer.

The Museum of Garden History is holding an exhibition on the Lost Gardens of Heligan, in Cornwall.

These remarkable gardens were saved by the pop entrepreneur Tim Smit, who started work there in the spring of 1991 and has now restored 57 acres. The garden was originally laid out by the Tremayne family.

Tree ferns are among the rare and beautiful plants that flourish in the mild Cornish climate, and there is also an impressive collection of Himalayan rhododendrons. The old walled kitchen garden has bee boles for skeps built into its walls. All the greenhouses and frames have been restored and now 300 different kinds of fruit and vegetables grow inside the sheltering walls.

The Heligan exhibition opens tomorrow and runs until 29 November. At 7pm on 13 November, Tim Smit will be talking about the restoration of the garden. Admission to the exhibition is free. Tickets for the lecture cost £6. To book, call 0171-401 8864.

Form, colour and harmony

Caroline Donald plans a winter garden

At this time of year, when you are surrounded by death and decay in the garden, a new level of sophistication is called for. It is time to concentrate on structure, without being waylaid by colour, which is so easy to do in the summer months.

However, if, like mine, your garden is the size of a peanut shell, you will probably find that, charming as evergreen shrubs now become, by default they tend to sit in gloomy lumps for most of the year. They are like stern, sombre chaperones, elbowing away attention (not to mention room and light) from the more dainty flowering perennials. A pinky-white *Viburnum tinus*, for example, had such a gay optimism to it when bought on a dull January day, but looked flat and drab for most of its flowerless year until it was settled in the space it deserved in a larger garden.

I therefore try to keep these winter shapers to a minimum and, instead, use plants that will give both decent summer flowers and, when their days are done, winter seedheads. These will add some architectural form and height to an otherwise sadly depleted border. To anyone dedicated to the cause of thrift, this has the bonus of making you feel as if you are getting two different plants for the price of one.

At the moment, the clematis 'Gipsy Queen' on my wall is struggling on with its last few dark velvety-purple flowers, but the hairy, greenish seedheads, like cheerleaders' mops, are cheering the branches of a rose that is fast divesting itself of its leaves. The most striking of the clematis seedheads are those of *Clematis tangutica*, a plant that in late summer bears small, lantern-like, buttercup-yellow flowers, which are then replaced by a mass of delightful, fluffy balls of silver in winter. Grow this vigorous climber through an old apple tree for a glorious outline on a bright, snowy morning; it will look as if the tree is covered in fairy lights. *Clematis orientalis* is similar, though less vigorous.

For all the care and attention I have to lavish on the two thirsty hydrangeas I have growing in pots, I expect them to make up for it in winter, when the rather camp and showy mop-heads of summer should dry out gracefully into papery shadows of their former selves. The once-brilliant white petals of 'Madame Emile Mouillère' are now a delicate shade of soft pale green, edged with a blush of pink. Eventually they will turn brown but still hold their shape, offering protection against frost and snow to the developing leaf tips within.

Likewise, the leaves of the rampant climbing hydrangea, *H petiolaris*, are yellowing rapidly and beginning their annual descent, revealing the fine, reddish-brown bark and the skeletal lacecap flowerheads, as well as the odd, previously hidden, bird's nest.

In a new border is an *Eryngium x tripartitum*, which is still settling in but doing its best to put on a brave show of spiky, thistle-like heads still touched with blue, while all around is in a state of collapse. The larger versions of the sea holly would be even more dramatic, as would the spent Barcelona cathedral-like spires of acanthus and verbascum, were there room.

The more modestly sized *Sedum spectabile* 'Autumn Joy' comes into its own about now, having been hidden for most of the summer by the bully-boy leaves of the peony, whose own flowering period is so short that it hardly seems to justify the space it takes up.

The sedum is cheering up the border no end, with wide, flat heads of dark pink flowers that tone elegantly with a rather leggy pot-grown chrysanthemum nearby. As with the hydrangea, the stiff heads will hold a fine display long after the sedum's fleshy leaves have died off.

The biennial honesty bears white to deep purple, scented flowerheads in summer, before transforming into the Japanese-looking paper-moon seedpods once so beloved of dried-flower arrangers. But beware, it is prolifically self-seeding.

Another staple of the dried-flower arrangement is the seedpod of *Papaver orientale*, such a stark pepperpot to find inside such blowzy petals.

In an ideal garden one would have hip-bearing species and shrub roses, such as the purple *Rosa rugosa*, which, along with its sister *R rugosa* 'Alba', produces cheerful, fat, red-and-orange hips. *Rosa moyesii* has blood-red flowers in summer, and, as the great rose-grower David Austin puts it in his *Handbook of Roses*, "they are followed by no lesser glory in the form of large crimson flagon-shaped hips." *R moyesii* 'Geranium' will produce even larger hips.

Also in this ideal garden would be a pond, far enough away from the house to merit a walk with the dogs. From a distance, standing out against the hoary frost, would be the tall, upright frame and distinctive cylindrical seedheads of the bulrush *Typha latifolia*, which can grow up to 2.5m tall.

A more realistic scale could be achieved with the 60cm-tall *Typha minima*, a delicate marginal water-plant that could be planted near a clump of *Iris foetidissima* – unkindly called the stinking iris – whose cylindrical seedpods open in winter to reveal rounded, scarlet fruits.

Even on the dullest November day, a well structured garden should give a reminder of summer past, and a premonition of things to come.

Glorious hips: *Rosa moyesii* 'Geranium' PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW LAWSON

Duff Hart-Davis

Land that will grow four tons of wheat to the acre and give good grazing is too valuable to be flooded with sewage effluent

For 300 years Neville Waters's family has farmed in the parish of Nash, just outside Newport in Gwent. But now their livelihood, like that of other farmers round them, is threatened by a scheme so idiotic as to be scarcely credible. The aim is to flood 1,000 acres of land – most of it with sewage effluent, some with sea water – to create a bird reserve.

To Mr Waters, the proposal is both practical madness and personal insult. If it goes ahead, he will lose 150 of the 270 acres which he farms, and his dairy herd may well go out of business. Apart from the fact that the scheme will cost £6m or £7m to implement, it will take £500,000 a year to run, and reduce annual agricultural production by at least £1m. It may also prove fatal to the rare plants and insects for which the area has been designated a site of special scientific interest.

The trouble has its origins in Cardiff Bay, 15 miles to the south west, where the Cardiff Bay Development Corporation is attempting to revitalise the waterfront. This project is now well advanced, and a key feature is the construction of a barrage across the estuary of the Taff and Ely rivers. This will turn the bay into a freshwater lake, flooding 500 acres of tidal mudflats and thus depriving several thousand wading birds, principally dunlin and redshank, of their feeding grounds.

Having fought the scheme unsuccessfully, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and other conservation bodies demanded compensation, and extracted a promise from the Secretary of State for Wales that alternative bird accommodation would be found. The promise was backed by the European Commission, which threatened prosecution if the Government did not take action. Now, with four other areas considered and rejected, the axe is poised above the Gwent Levels, a strip of farmland along the coast south of Newport.

Nobody claims that this area is beautiful. Its western end is dominated by a vast power station, now closed down; inland, industrial development has sprawled out in a hideous barrier between the coastal plain and the hills. Nevertheless, the Levels are fascinating, for every acre bears evidence of man's 2,000-year struggle to control the ubiquitous water. Within a high sea-wall the flat fields are bounded by a network of reens (major watercourses) and lesser ditches. The oldest fields have shallow open channels, known as grips, running at right angles to the main ridge-and-furrow drainage system. Out of sight below ground are more modern drains filled with pipes and shingle.

The developers claim that the soil is very poor, and should be graded 3B. Local farmers retort that 80 per cent of the land in Wales is graded 4 or 5, and is rock or bog: the Levels are thus in the top 20 per cent by any reckoning. Land which will grow four tons of wheat to an acre and produce excellent grazing is far too valuable (they say) to be flooded with sewage effluent.

That is the imminent fate of the area known as saltmarsh. All drains will be blocked. Fields will be surrounded by bunds, or banks, of earth. Houses within the reserve will be ringed by individual bunds, with effluent lapping outside them from October to May.

Close to the derelict power station, ash has settled over the years to a depth of 12ft or 14ft in huge ponds specially built to contain it. These deposits contain boron, arsenic and other noxious materials, yet now some of them are to be excavated to a depth of 3ft so that they too can be flooded with sewage, in the hope of establishing a colony of – wait for it – bitterns.

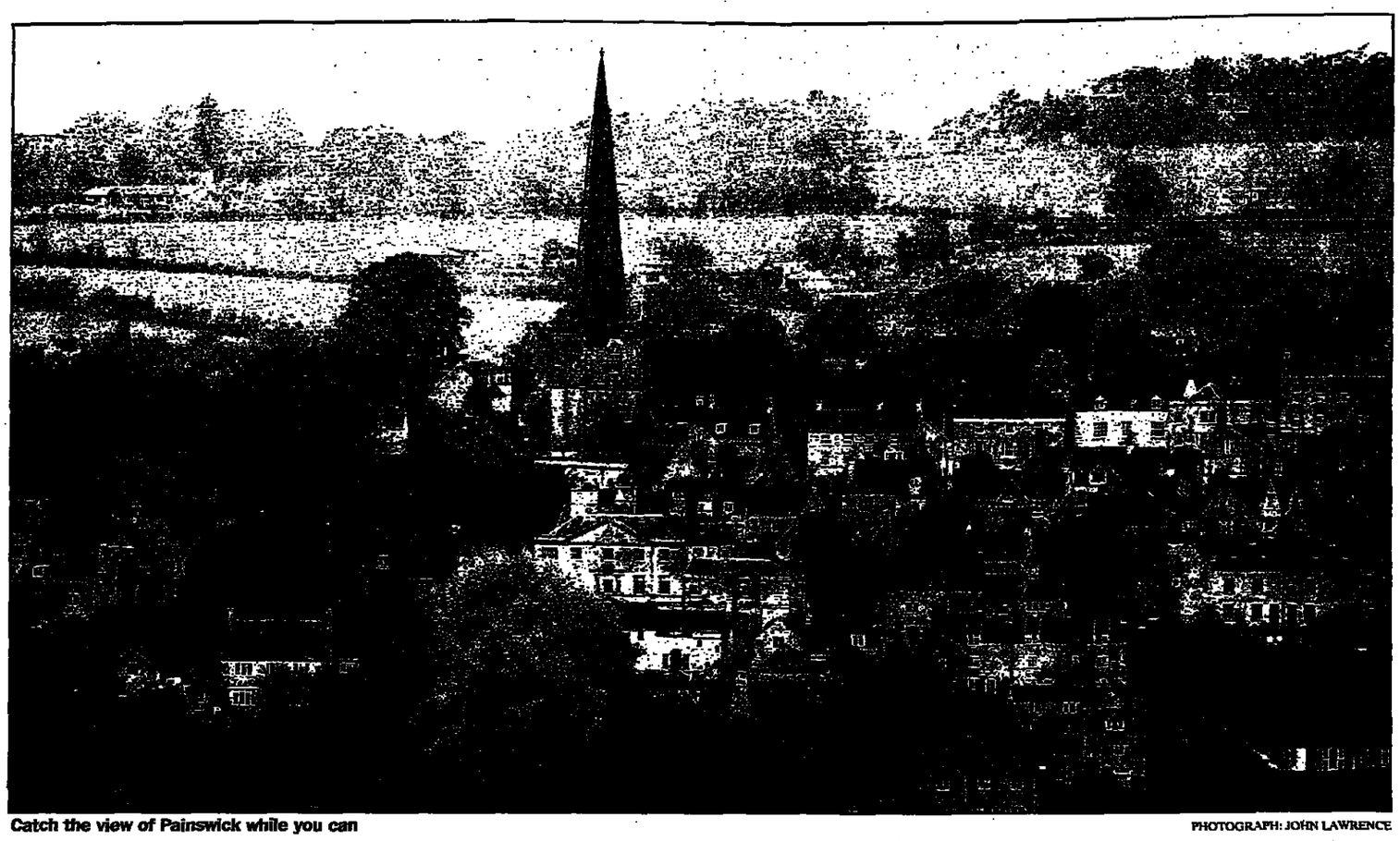
There is clearly some risk that poisonous substances will contaminate the sewage effluent. Even advocates of the scheme admit that the habitat of the new reserve will be different from that of Cardiff Bay, and will not attract the displaced species.

Until last week, the Newport Planning Committee had been proposing to make a recommendation to the local council without even looking at the site. Then, at the last minute, they agreed to hold a site inspection. So the protest group has won a temporary reprieve.

No wonder the farmers are enraged by the thought that the labour of generations will be brought to nothing, that they will lose their land by compulsory purchase, and that several small family businesses will go under.

What annoys them most is that decisions are being taken by distant quangos whose members are totally ignorant of the area.

"The Government keeps talking about freedom of choice," said Mr Waters, "and yet we have none. Instead, we have to listen to a lot of twaddle from people who don't know the first thing about our environment, our heritage, our businesses, our traditions – and from people who don't care, either."



Catch the view of Painswick while you can

PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN LAWRENCE

A belt-and-braces foray

On foot: the Slad Valley, near Stroud. By Duff Hart-Davis

There is only one thing better than walking *to* a pub – and that is walking *from* a pub as well. When I set out from The Woolpack, in the Slad valley near Stroud, aiming for the Black Horse at Cranham, high in the wooded hills to the north, I deliberately made it a belt-and-braces foray: if my strength gave out at the Black Horse, I could settle down and seek a lift back to my car; if all went well, I could complete a circle and return to The Woolpack.

Slad is celebrated as the home of Laurie Lee: here he was born, here he wrote *Cider with Rosie*, and from this deep, wide valley he walked out one midsummer morning to conquer the world. The Woolpack is still his local, and he is to be found there most days.

Of more consequence to the walker are the pub's excellent food and beer, not least splendid ales from Uley Brewery, just over the hill. The latest of these, Severn Boar, is a knockout, and at 6 per cent alcohol a worthy successor to the notorious stupefacient Pigor Mortis: as somebody remarked, a couple of pints of Boar, and you will probably find yourself doing a circular walk, willy-nilly.

You can leave a car outside the pub and walk from there. A better alternative, though, is to drive a mile uphill to Bull's Cross, a small intersection, and park in the lay-by. Then you have only a few yards of tarmac before a footpath dives off to the left through scrub and grassland.

Catch the view while you can. Far out across the valley to the left, the slender spire of Painswick church rises gracefully from a cluster of grey houses. Then you are into the woods proper – Blackstable Wood, to be precise – and very fine it is: slender, well-thinned beech trunks rising like the columns of a cathedral.

From the wood, the track climbs right-handed across the slope: take any right fork which offers itself, to gain height. At the top the path runs level until it reaches a gate at the end. There, bear right, up on to the metalled road, but at the next little crossroads take the left-hand lane, towards Sheepscombe – though only for 100 yards or so. Then turn right into the trees, through a patch of nettles, on to an unsigned path which follows the contour, in and out, for more than a mile along the top edge of Elder Hill, Beech Wood and Piper's Wood.

Slots in a muddy patch remind you that this is fallow deer country, and that the rut is on. Probably the deer are watching you go by from the safety of some thicket.

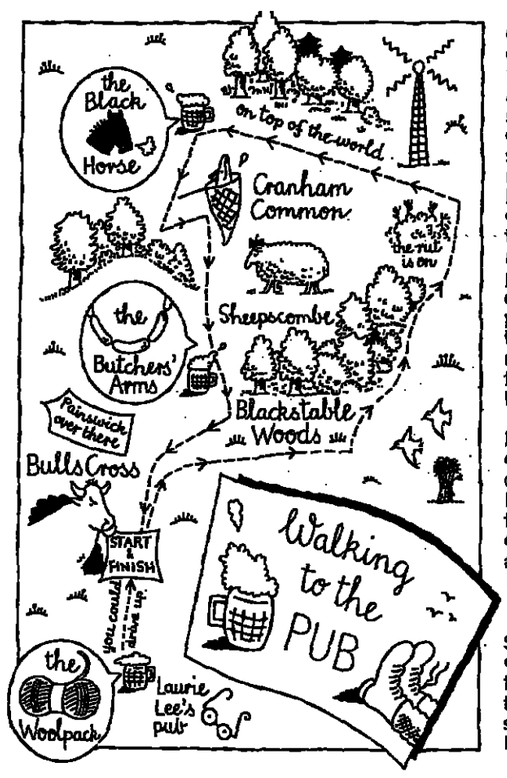
At the end of the wood, the path debouches on to a bridleway which runs right-handed up to Ebworth Farm. After a couple of hundred yards on the road, fork left across a big, flat field, fizzing with larks. Head for the radio mast at Overtown Farm, and thence straight along the lane to Cranham.

Up there, the walker feels as if he is on top of the world, with the brashy stone of the Cotswold plateau showing through the soil; yet still more woods roll and tumble on the horizon, and at this time of the year the sight of autumn reds and golds blazing on the huge, forested bank behind Cranham is one to make you stand and stare.

At the Black Horse, a small and friendly pub, you may well succumb to the beer and the haggis with bacon or the fisherman's pie. If you feel fit to carry on, strike out straight past the car park, up the track on to Cranham Common, over, down, left and right round a fishing lake, up through Saltridge Wood and steeply down to the hamlet of Sheepscombe, where, as if by magic, you come to earth right beside the Butcher's Arms.

Fortified yet again, you plunge down and up again through the village, following signposts for Stroud. Thereafter you can either bear left on a footpath, back up into Blackstable Wood, and follow the track along the bottom edge, or keep to the lane, which leads back to Bull's Cross.

The distances are about five miles out and three-and-a-half back – but be warned: the route is far from flat, and it will take at least three hours, besides creating a very considerable thirst.



Outward route

- From Bull's Cross walk uphill 50 yards, then turn left at footpath sign. Cross two stiles, and proceed into wood.
- Keep to the right across slope, taking any possible right fork. At end of wood bear right on to Tarmac road.
- At next crossroads turn left, then almost immediately right into trees on unsigned path. Follow path through top of wood, keeping as high as possible. At end, take right turn up bridleway to minor road. Then fork left at footpath sign across field. Rejoin lane sign to Cranham.

Return route

- From Black Horse take path over Cranham Common. Follow footpath signs round fishing lake.
- Go through gate into wood and make a steep climb, along track beside stone wall. Then walk down, over rough grass, into Sheepscombe.
- Back on the Tarmac road follow signposts for Stroud, then either bear left at footpath sign into wood, or follow lane, back to Bull's Cross.

Maps: sheets 1089 and 1113 of the Ordnance Survey Pathfinder series, two-and-a-half inches to the mile.

Pubs: The Woolpack in Slad (01452 813429) is open from 11am to 3pm on Saturdays, other days 12pm to 3pm. The Black Horse in Cranham (01452 812217) opens from 12pm to 2pm on Sundays, 12pm-3pm on other days.

Dark, damp and dangerous

Fighting claustrophobia, Jonathan Green explores the world of the caver

Two hundred feet below the earth's surface, Ian Jeffries lay immobile under the icy blast of an underground waterfall. The compound fracture of his leg was becoming infected. Hypothermia was turning his skin the colour of porcelain.

On a disastrous three-man caving party in Slaughter Stream Cave in the Forest of Dean, he had plunged 15 feet off a ledge to land under the cascade. A colleague had also fallen, and lay in a crumpled heap nearby. The third man had gone for help but had got lost in the pitch-black labyrinth of tunnels, and returned having been unable to find his way out. "I thought the hypothermia was going to kill me," recalls Ian. Grimly, they all waited.

Specialised help was already massing its ranks. When the trio failed to meet friends at a pub, the alarm was raised and Gloucestershire Cave Rescue Group scrambled into action. Around 40 volunteers, all experienced cavers, arrived at the cave entrance in the early hours of the morning. Ropes, ladders and a human network were set up. Rescuers were equipped with neoprene exposure bags to swaddle casualties in, and "little dragons" – specially heated oxygen to infuse warmth into the body.

The UK's 16 cave rescue organisations are called to 60 such incidents each year. Rescuers battle their way in darkness, often without radio contact, through cave systems that can run to 30 miles. But they don't rescue only cavers. Often they recover animals that have fallen down shafts (one team boasted the rescue of a duck last year), and have helped the police to recover hidden murder weapons.

Trainee cave rescuers in Wales

At a conference of cave rescue teams, hosted by the South Wales Cave Rescue Organisation last month, I joined hardened cavers as they practised new techniques – from containing hypothermia to using explosives in rescue. Deep underground, cave divers mounted an exercise using a stretcher specially designed for immersion in submerged tunnels.

Pete Allwright is secretary of both the British Cave Rescue Council and the country's busiest team, the Cave Rescue Organisation in the Yorkshire Dales, which responds to 25 per cent of all call-outs in the UK. "Underground, you can forget all about ambulance call-out times," he explains. "Unlike Mountain Rescue, who can sometimes just fly people out with a helicopter, we have to retrace the casualties' steps to take them out. The operation can take many hours."

Sergeant Chris Pappin, based at Ingleton, North Yorkshire, is the liaison officer between the police and the Cave Rescue Organisation (CRO), to which all 999 calls for emergencies in caves are referred. "On paper, the police have overall control of an operation, but in practice it is all down to the CRO," he says. "We really just provide a supportive role for them."

As volunteers know to their cost, rescue work carries an emotional price. In August this year Christine Bleakley, a 24-year-old student, fell to her death negotiating the Quaking Pot at nearby Ingleborough. It is listed as a grade 5 pot, and the most dangerous in Britain. "The name really does make rescuers quake in their boots," says Pete Allwright.

Yet, thanks to rescue organisations, fatalities are relatively few. "If someone dies it affects you badly, especially if you are on the rescue team," says Constable Andy Watson, who was involved in the operation to try to save Christine. "Cavers are a close community, and her death was felt by everyone."

Yet accidents tend not to deter cavers. Certainly Ian Jeffries' fall hasn't dampened his enthusiasm. He'll be back down again as soon as his leg is mended.

Deep in the bowels of the Ogof Ffynnon Ddu black limestone caves in Wales, a glimmer of light pierces the darkness. Within seconds a team of muddy rescuers appears, rapidly hauling a stretcher up an underground stream. There is no real casualty, just a volunteer tied to the frame for the purposes of training. It is dank, chilly and a long way to the surface.

Why do people go caving? "You can be the first to find a passage nobody has been in before," explains a mud-bespattered caver. "It is the challenge of the unknown." And he beams.

هكذا من الأصل

money & homes

How to become a sleek mover

Rosalind Russell continues her series on finding a new home

You would be lucky to spend less than £600 for moving the contents of a two-bedroom flat

PHOTOGRAPH: NICHOLAS TUR

The cheapest day to move house is a cold, blustery Tuesday in January. Preferably, make it the last day of the month – unless it's a Friday, in which case February would do. If this sounds like a silly conundrum, work out how much money it may save and it won't seem so ridiculous.

Many removal companies work to a "domestic removals seasonal planner", which really means they charge more to move you at a time you find convenient. For instance, during school holidays, on a Friday (when you could have the weekend to unpack before returning to work) or when the weather is sunny and your belongings won't get sodden between van and house. The difference could be as much as 20 per cent of the removal cost.

Some lenders give a spiteful twist to the equation by charging a redemption fee on your mortgage to the end of the month. Move in the middle of the month, and you've lost two weeks' redemption money.

It is, of course, impossible to predict exactly when your property will sell – and your buyer may be less enthusiastic about a winter move than you are – but solicitors can be chivvied to avoid landing you with a Friday completion.

Although 90 per cent of moves are within a 10-mile radius, according to the National Association of Estate Agents the cost can easily run into several thousand pounds. Solicitors dealing with "virgin" buyers find it easy to prolong the procedure – and hike up their fee – by sending frivolous letters asking the vendors if they intend to leave the dustbins behind. Cheeky estate agents sometimes demand a deposit of a couple of hundred pounds from the buyer, over and above the deposit lodged with a solicitor, "to show serious intent".

By the time you have paid an agent up to 3 per cent to sell your home, and handed over Stamp Duty of 1 per cent on the purchase price (above £60,000), money seems to be haemorrhaging faster than in a scene from *Cardiac Arrest*.

The Halifax will run off a quick quotation for customers, showing what likely costs will be on a given mortgage figure (for illustrative purposes only; a firm offer depends on a detailed interview). A £100,000 repayment mortgage over 25 years, for instance, will attract a conveyancer's mortgage charge, a bit of flannel which translates as more cash for solicitors for dealing with the deeds (£148.05); mortgage indemnity if more than 80 per cent of the purchase price is borrowed (£259.40); initial interest (£305.57); and the survey and valuation fee, often around £400.

Having change of address cards printed usually costs about £40 and asking the Royal Mail to redirect the post for three months will relieve you of another £13. Children changing schools? New school uniforms to buy. New carpets, new curtains... By the time you think about booking a removal company, the instinct is to keep a firm grip on what money you have left.

A DIY removal should be considered only if you have hardly any possessions, are totally broke and have a hefty friend with free use of a van. Cheap deals with removal companies can be negotiated if the customer packs, but then the removal firm won't cover breakages. Given that a recent *Which?* report revealed that in 25 per cent of all household moves something is lost, stolen or damaged, it's worth finding a reliable remover who is a member of the British Association of Removers (BAR), and even more important if you are shipping goods overseas. Shark shippers will take your belongings, take your money and then go bust, leaving your container bobbing about in some foreign port – or, worse, running up dock charges.

Removal costs will depend on the cubic capacity of your household goods (including the contents of the shed and garage); whether you have difficult items such as antiques or pianos, which may involve a sub contractor; and ease of access. If you have unwanted china, glass, pictures and clothes, prepare to shed them now: Oxfam, in partnership with BAR, will supply you with Oxboxx cartons and sacks to fill with items not wanted on the voyage, which can be sold to raise funds.

Some firms, such as East Anglia-based Abels – who have moved the interior designer Nina Campbell – can provide upmarket extras such as a maid service. Until recently they owned a team of heavy horses which pulled a Victorian pantechnicon and appeared at country shows.

"The horses also worked," says Abels' Andrew Hoyle. "One customer had moved into his house 60 years ago, using our horse-drawn pantechnicon. When he moved out he used it again."

These days, says Mr Hoyle, you should be asking your removal firm whether their vehicles have air-ride suspension, which reduces the risk of damage due to vibration.

"Ask if the same team will work on your move from start to finish. Some firms cut costs by swapping crews halfway through a job, especially if the move is outside the 'footprint' of a particular branch. This increases the risk to furniture if the team that wrapped isn't the same one doing the unwrapping. Che they are not casual part-time staff, a that they carry identity."

No removal firms will be quoted on average house move price, but you wou be lucky to pay less than £600 on the co tents of a two-bedroom flat, moving miles. If the firm is a BAR member, to negotiate free cover under the Carel scheme as part of the quote. It provi assistance if your car breaks down on t way to your new house, help in a dom tic emergency, accommodation if you stranded and can't move in as plann and general drama-solving. Or you c forget the whole idea and stay where y are.

PS: 31 January 1997 is a Friday, and s 28 February.

Shopping for a chalet

By Mary Wilson

To own a home on the side of a ski slope, with only a few metres of crisp snow between your front door and the ski lift, must be the dream of many a passionate skier. Skiing is, of course, an expensive sport, but if you buy a chalet or apartment in a good location you can cover your costs by letting it out when you are not there.

When deciding to go shopping for a chalet, consideration should be given to international access, how easy it is to get to the centre of the resort, the ski lifts, and the variety of skiing for all members of the family.

"In most cases, this decision is based on past holidays," says Paddy Dring of Knight Frank. "The skiing property market has remained slow during the past two years, but the strong French and Swiss francs have pushed prices downwards, which in turn has led to an increase in the number of people now considering buying a skiing property."

It is relatively easy, if you have the wherewithal, to buy a ski property in many parts of Europe; France and Andorra especially spring to mind. But buying in Switzerland can be difficult. The Swiss government restricts foreign ownership in several cantons and although allocations are made each year for a number of newly built properties to be sold to foreigners, you sometimes have to put your name down on a waiting list.

"In those cantons where it is possible for foreigners to purchase, you may only resell to another foreigner after 10 years of ownership – sometimes five years, in cases of ill health or financial distress," says Simon Malster, of Investors in Property. "In the canton of Vaud, in which Montreux and Villars are, it is proposed that these restrictions will be reduced to five and three years respectively. The vote will take place mid-November."

Simon Malster is selling a one-bedroom apartment in a very pretty chalet, Chalet l'Orée du Bois, in Barboleuse, near Villars. This is within a 15-minute walk of the *télécabine* that gives access to all the pistes of Villars and Les Diablerets. The apartment is carpeted, has a fully fitted kitchen, and is priced at 195,000 SFr, about £97,500.

Arlette Adler, of Villas Abroad, is selling a semi-detached chalet at Les Diablerets, which has a large lounge, three bedrooms, separate studio/granny flat and garden, for 430,000 Sfr (£215,000). "Les Diablerets is a very good ski resort, only half an hour from Lake Geneva," she says. "Switzerland is no longer the most expensive place to ski as it has recently brought its rates down by at least 10 per cent, and it is now much better value, especially for family skiing. Meanwhile France has become expensive, as well as the exchange rate being bad for British visitors."

In France, Val d'Isère and Méribel remain popular. Here properties sell for between 3m and 4m FF (£400,000 and £540,000). At Trois Vallées prices have dropped a little, and there are plenty of resales and some bargains to be had. Here, and in the Portes du Soleil ski area, you would be looking at prices mostly over 2m FF (£270,000).

At the top end of the market in Méribel, an eight-bedroom, seven-bathroom chalet which belonged to the late Sir Peter Scott is for sale. This has been on the market for a couple of years, but has recently seen a considerable price reduction, and Knight Frank and Hamptons are now offering it for £1.9m.

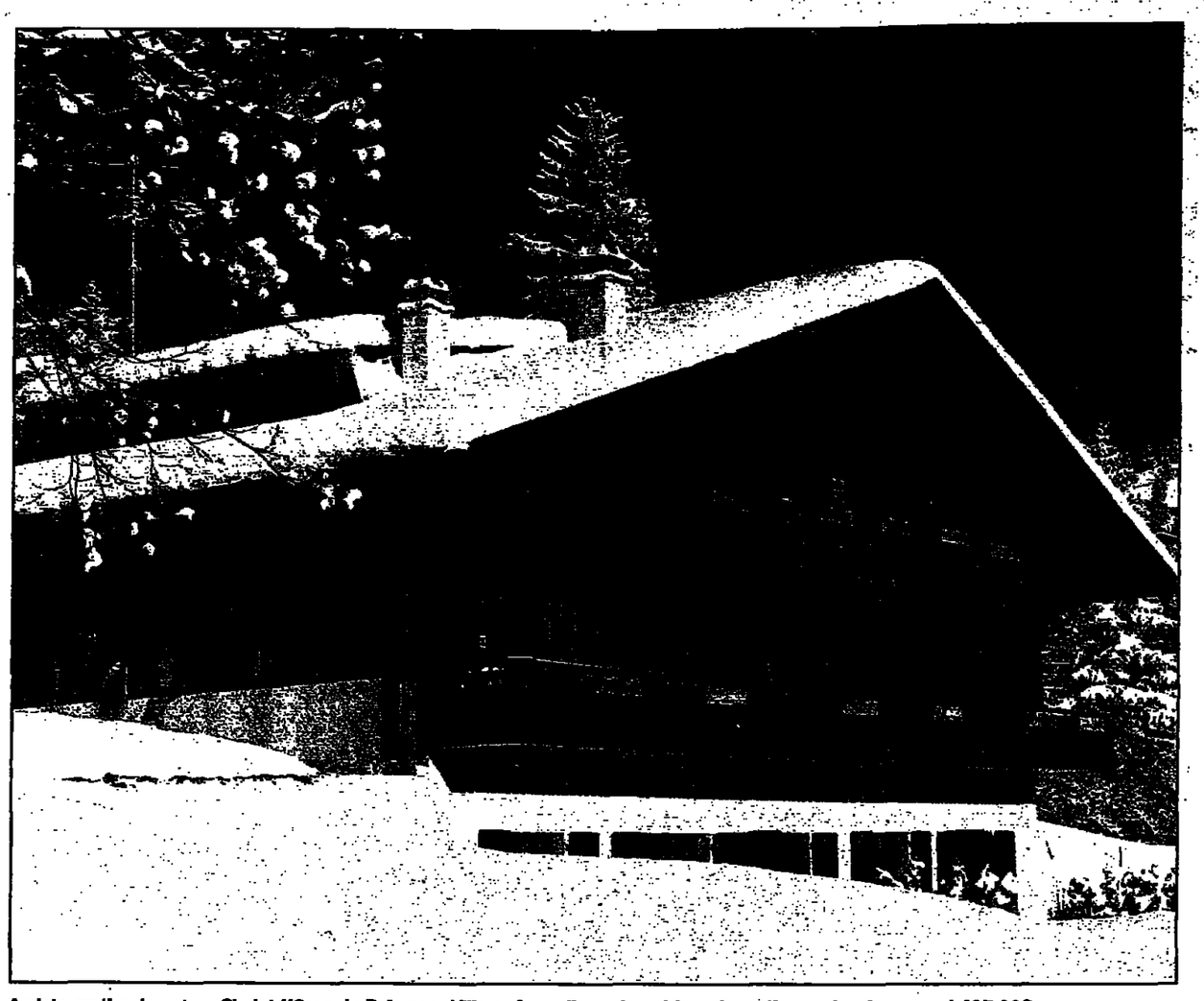
For those without this sort of cash, a very much cheaper option would be to buy a newly built apartment at Oz-en-Oisans, a new resort 45 minutes from Grenoble. It is due to be expanded in 1997 if the new mayor agrees to a hotel being built. Here two- and three-storey chalets have been built on the slopes on the Grandes Rousses. Prices range from around £40,000 for a one-bedroom apartment to £110,000 for a four-bedroom flat.

"It is just as good a resort in the summer as the winter," says Charles Eyston, who is marketing the properties. "People still don't think of the Alps as a place to go in the summer, but there is plenty to do – from white-water rafting to mountain biking."

Meanwhile, in Andorra, the top resorts of Arinsal, Ordina La Massana and Soldeu (the star resort with the biggest ski terrain), business is good. Resales start at around £42,000 for a one-bedroom apartment with a garage, while a small house with a garden and a chalet will sell for about £125,000 to £130,000.

CISA, an established construction company in Andorra, builds apartments and houses and also offers a management and letting service for those wanting to rent out their ski homes. One of their tiny studio flats, 10 minutes from Soldeu, costs around £22,000, a two-bedroom flat sells for from £65,000 and a large house will cost around £265,000.

Investors in Property (0181-905 5511); Villas Abroad (0181-941 4499); Oz-en-Oisans (0181-394 1114); Knight Frank (0171-629 8171); Hamptons (0171-824 8822); CISA (00376 835 228).



A piste on the doorstep: Chalet L'Oree du Bois near Villars. A small apartment here is on the market for around £97,000

Photograph: Lorenzo Agius

Great cars, lousy karma

My biggest mistake

BJ Cunningham of 'Death' cigarettes

"So if you are interested in this clearance stock call The Karma Connection and ask for the man in the steaming bath with the razor blade screaming for his mother... So ended the last press release I sent out, as my first entrepreneurial venture, with pedal to the metal, headed for oblivion.

The Karma Connection was my first foray into business, fresh out of a post-graduate degree in three-dimensional design (pottery class). It was a relatively simple business, trading the price and quality differentials between the UK and California in classic sports cars and Harley Davidson motorcycles – both great passions of mine.

The idea was to connect UK customers with the rust-free car of their dreams, at the right price. In short, to inject positive karma into the classic car trade.

At the time in the Eighties, classic cars were booming, the sterling/dollar exchange rate was favourable and you simply couldn't go wrong. I spent half the year in California and the desert belt, purchasing bikes and cars, riding them across the two-lane blacktops of America en route to the coast and the container ports. The other half of the year was spent selling them in the UK.

In most cases the cars were sold before they were even seen in the UK and almost without exception, for a two-year period, I doubled my money on every vehicle. Luxury.

I was young and I believed in it. This was the very late Eighties and all was still fantastically well. My initial investment in one Karman Ghia eventually translated into a fleet of exotic cars and beautiful bikes.

The idea of consolidating profits or 'risk management' seemed ridiculous. This was a gravy train and I thought I could lick the bowl. I was oblivious to any macro-economic factors, every little deal I turned seemed absolutely separate from the wider economic cycle. As far as I was concerned this could never end.

What I absolutely and resolutely failed to understand was that the whole market for my vehicles was a 'bubble'. My customers were buying not for their personal use but to sell on at a greater profit.

Karma, indeed. I was a tiny link in a huge chain but couldn't see past my own steering wheel. The bank loved me, my girlfriend loved me, the world was my lobster.

When it went wrong it went horribly wrong. I had £750,000 worth of cars and bikes in containers coming down the Panama Canal and life was a breeze. Then a Ferrari failed to reach its reserve at auction in London. This (in my world) tiny hiccup catastrophically changed my life.

The bubble had burst. The whole market went into a nose-dive and I was quite literally up a creek without a paddle. I watched helplessly as the market collapsed, taking me with it.

My stock, my beautiful stock, was falling out of bed at a rate of tens of thousands of pounds per week and I took it all extremely personally. I believed someone, everyone, was out to stuff me. My old pals at the bank seemed to turn in an instant into demons. My relationship with my girlfriend went down the toilet, as did the previously simple and straightforward relationship with my business partner. Everything turned into a nightmare, bad karma.

My mistake was the old 'eggs in one basket' classic, coupled with tunnel vision and zero true market perspective. My eggs cooked up into one nasty omelette and I had to eat it. In the end I managed to offload my stock to a Japanese guy whom I chanced upon. He saved me thousands but I hated him for it. I was left for dead, another festering road kill of the Eighties.

Drowning my sorrows in LA led to Death cigarettes. What goes around comes around, Death seemed like the right move. It took me four years to climb out of the debt with my bank, who were in some respects incredibly forgiving with such a messy and naive young pup.

I learnt that while you must believe the unbelievable to make the impossible possible, you must also remove the rose-tinted glasses and never believe your own hype. Too bad you're gonna die."

BJ Cunningham is chairman and founder of the Enlightened Tobacco Company (ETC), which makes Death cigarettes. He was talking to Paul Slade.

Time it right and strike it rich

Alison Eadie explores commodity funds

Traditional wisdom states that commodity markets are not for widows and orphans and should be left to deep-pocketed investors with nerves of steel. Why, then, should ordinary investors consider putting money into natural resources funds which invest in the companies producing the commodities?

The answer, according to Mark Lawson-Statham, who manages Fleming Natural Resources investment trust and Save & Prosper's Energy Industries unit trust, is twofold. Firstly by buying equities investors are tapping into the process and not just the commodity price.

"We are looking for well-managed companies that can keep volumes rising and costs under control. If volumes double or treble each year, the commodity price can halve." He points out that the correlation between share and commodity prices is anyway limited, except in the case of gold.

The second argument in favour is that, although commodity prices are notoriously cyclical, cyclicality is now imposed on an upward sloping line due to rising demand from developing nations. Demand for commodities traditionally falls when recession hits the developed world, but it rose during the last recession in OECD countries, due to the healthy appetite of the fast-growing economies of China, India and elsewhere. With populations and living standards rising fast in Asia, massive growth in demand for oil and other natural resources is expected.

The counter-argument centres on the state of commodity prices, which have given little scope for long-term growth whatever the underlying demand.

Brian O'Neill, whose responsibilities include Gartmore's Gold and International Resources unit trust, says: "We look on commodities as a cyclical phenomenon and have only recommended our fund seriously to investors once in the last 10 years."

That was in 1987 when gold was soaring. He points out that the index of commodity prices compiled by the Commodities Research Bureau stood at 218 in 1973 and at 245 in mid-October, a rise of 12 per cent in 23 years.

In the short term timing is also crucial. Mercury launched its World Mining investment trust in December 1993 in the expectation that economic recovery among developed nations would fuel demand for metals and minerals. Destocking and other difficulties like the Sumitomo copper scandal have, however, kept prices subdued. The trust's asset value at the end of September was up 16.6 per cent since inception, substantially underperforming the UK stock market. The trust's shares are still trading below launch price.

Everyone agrees commodity prices are impossibly hard to predict. The recent bounce in the oil price was not expected, but it has worked wonders for energy funds. If the experts cannot forecast with accuracy, what hope for the lay investor?

David Hutchins, manager of M&G's Commodity and General and Gold and General unit trusts, says the sector has been much maligned because private investors have piled in at the top of the cycle and not necessarily picked quality vehicles.

He argues there is a case for a broadly based commodity fund in a diversified portfolio, but accepts it has to be monitored carefully. It cannot be bought and locked away like a low risk UK equity income or tracker fund.

Despite the roller-coaster image of natural resources companies, Mr Hutchins points out that RTZ has never cut its dividend. The way to manage risk, he suggests, is to invest in a collective vehicle with a mix of blue chip and speculative or even unquoted stocks.

The performance of commodity funds over the years varies not just with economic cycles, but according to the manager. Micropal shows that over the past five years to the beginning of October the best performing unit trust was Mercury Gold and General, up 313.8 per cent, and the worst Allied Dunbar Metals, Minerals and Commodities, up 42.2 per cent. In the same period the gold price rose 20 per cent and the oil price 21 per cent.

Since launch in 1976 to half-year results in August, M&G's Commodity and General Fund grew by an average annual compound rate of 11.6 per cent, or 13.8 per cent, with net income reinvested, compared with inflation at an average annual 7.1 per cent.

The best way to secure long-term gains, suggests Mr Hutchins, is via a regular savings plan which ensures that fewer units are bought at times of boom and more at times of bust.

Single commodity funds are much more risky than broadly based ones, and gold dances to a different tune from the rest. Its use as a safe haven in times of war has diminished with the ending of foreign exchange controls and the rise of financial futures.

Although there is a demand for jewellery, especially from Asia, gold is not subject to the same supply and demand fundamentals as commodities with an industrial use. If it is difficult to get commodity prices right, experts agree it is impossible to forecast gold accurately.

That said, several fund managers believe now is a good time to look at commodity funds. The opening up of hitherto closed parts of the world, including countries in the former USSR, means there are more accessible and plentiful reserves. Exploratory risk has been swapped for political risk, which is more quantifiable from a portfolio viewpoint, says Mr Lawson-Statham.

Metal stockpiles are getting low, the world's big economies are growing and the renewed risk of trouble in the Middle East could trigger a sudden leap in prices. Stock market sentiment is still bearish and both Mercury's and Fleming's investment trusts are trading at substantial discounts to net asset value. But the outlook is improving.

Uncle's good for a loan

Pawnbroking is enjoying a revival in popularity, says Ian Hunter

Sainsbury's may be about to become one of the newest lenders, but spare a thought for Uncle who, despite his age and old-fashioned image, is still lending money. In fact, according to the National Pawnbrokers Association, the pawnbroking business is enjoying a steady revival.

The NPA says: "Pawnbroking has successfully shaken off its Dickensian image. The recent upsurge in the industry's fortunes came during the 1980s credit boom and has continued into the 1990s with customers preferring this convenient form of high-street borrowing – customers that banks and building societies turned their backs on during the squeeze."

Contrary to popular belief, pawnbroking is regulated like any other form of credit. The Office of Fair Trading is responsible for granting licences to pawnbrokers. Pawnbrokers' operations are governed by the Consumer Credit Act 1974. It is an offence for a pawnbroker to accept goods from a minor.

John Quigg is a pawnbroker with the north London-based Pledge Company. The company offers loans of varying duration at different rates of interest.

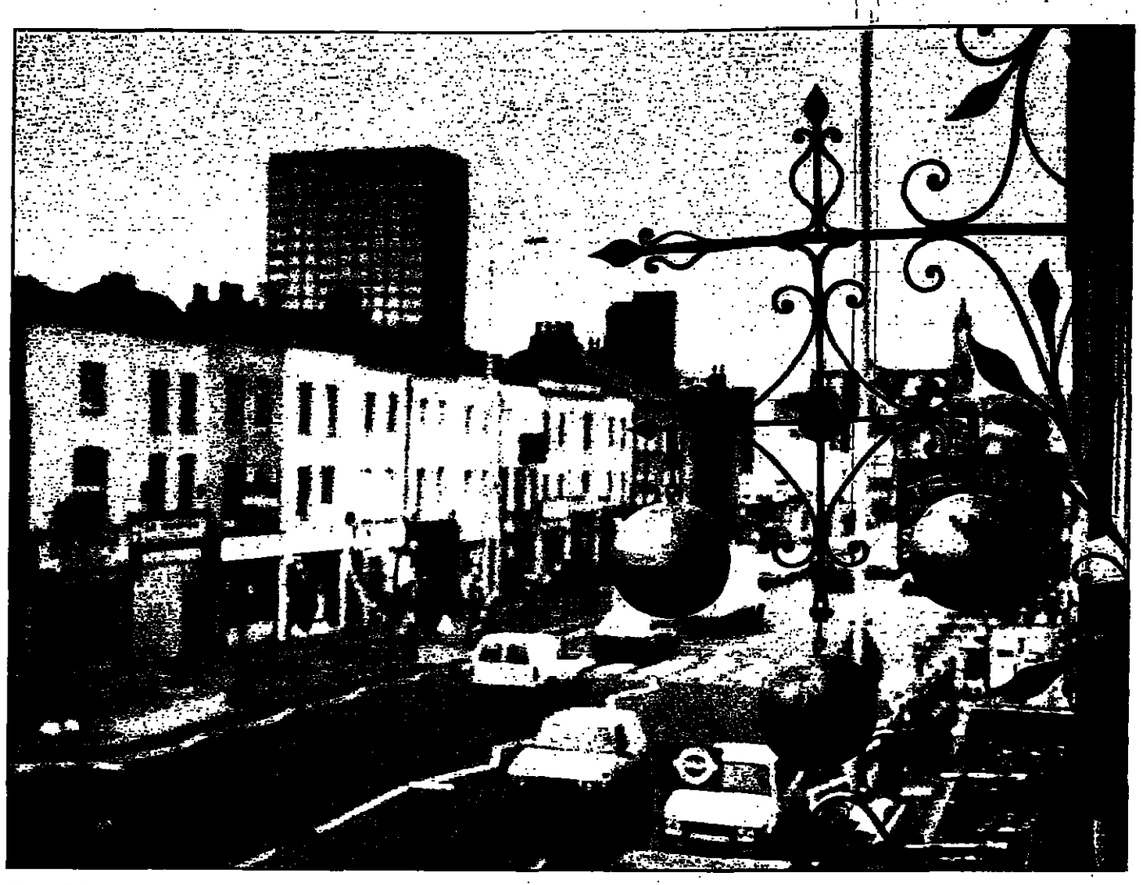
He explains: "We would normally offer a monthly loan of up to £100 secured against a TV or video. Interest is charged at a rate of 10 per cent per week."

Six-monthly loans can be secured at more competitive rates on items such as musical instruments and jewellery. The company will also raise loans against property or share certificates. Recently, Mr Quigg explains, £20,000 was lent to a customer in return for his BMW car as security. The customer was given the option to renew the loan for a further six months at the end of the term.

Borrowing from pawnbrokers can be expensive by conventional standards. Even credit card rates may look cheap by comparison. However, as pawnbrokers are quick to point out, credit can be provided immediately, without the need for any credit checks. When small sums are involved, it can even be more cost-effective to use a pawnbroker than to cash a cheque.

The pawnbroker requires proof of ownership before entering into a loan agreement. When an item is pawned, the customer should receive a receipt and a credit agreement. If you lose the receipt, you should inform the pawnbroker to prevent someone else redeeming the goods.

At the end of the loan period, the borrower will receive a notice explaining that the loan and outstanding interest are now payable. If the loan and the interest are paid, the goods are returned to the borrower. The customer may, however, have the option to renew the loan.



Sign of the times: The upsurge in pawnbroking's fortunes started during the 1980s credit boom Photograph: Tom Pilston

If the borrower does not respond to the notice served, the pawnbroker can take steps to dispose of the goods. The pawnbroker is obliged to give the customer notice of his intention to sell the goods, however, and at that stage the customer's only possible option if he wishes to prevent a sale is to apply to the county court for more time to pay the debt.

Contrary to myth, the pawnbroker cannot simply hold on to the goods, regardless of their value, if the customer does not repay the loan. The pawnbroker, when he decides to sell the goods, is under an obligation to obtain the best price possible. Any surplus, once the loan and accrued interest have been paid, should be returned to the customer.

Many pawnbrokers routinely send the goods to auction to avoid the accusation that they have failed to obtain the best possible price. Meanwhile the customer remains under an obligation to pay interest up until the time the goods are sold.

Mr Quigg says: "Sometimes the pawnbroker loses out in these situations, as the market value of the goods does not always equal the value of the loan and accrued interest. This is particularly true of computer equipment which can, because of constant innovations, lose its value rapidly."

Pawnbrokers are not liable if goods are destroyed or stolen, provided they have taken reasonable care of them.

Mr Quigg says: "All of our valuables are securely stored in vaults." The NPA states that it "safeguards customers' and members' interests with its Customer Protection Plan and Agreed Extra Value insurance schemes for pledged goods".

The NPA sees a bright future for its members. It says: "Pawnbrokers are now moving swiftly and very comfortably alongside high street lending institutions and are providing a service very similar to that offered by banks and building societies but one with which they cannot compete for speed and convenience."

The leaflet "Using a Pawnbroker – Just Another Way of Borrowing Money" is produced by the Office of Fair Trading.

The National Pawnbrokers' Association: 0171-242-1114

هكذا من الاصل

What's on offer on the flexible mortgage front

Product name	Variable rate %	Overpayment	Monthly under-payment	Lump-sum withdrawal	Payment holiday per year	Additional notes
Abbey National Flexi-break	7.04	No	No	No	After 9 mths, up to 8 int free payments in 1st 5 yrs	
Bank of Scotland via local branch **Mortgage Direct Centrebank** Personal Choice	6.99	Monthly. If lump sum, min £500	Yes, maximum o/s balance - 6 monthly instalments	Min £500. Max 12 cheques pa	Yes	Bank of Scotland fee £250. Others no fee
Clydesdale Bank Flexible Repayment Mtg	6.49/6.99 and fixed rates	Yes	No	No	No	Rate 6.49% if bank's buildings and contents inurance arranged
First National BS (NI) Mortgage Trust Early Payment Plus	Any variable product	Yes	Yes within available reserve	£50 within available reserve	Yes	Available on self-certification, max 75%
Homeloans Direct Flexible Repayment Mtg	6.45	Monthly. If lump sum up to 20% pa	Yes, set minimum	No	No	
Legal & General Mortgage Servs Mortgage by Design	6.24	Monthly min £50. If lump sum min £500	Yes within available reserve	Yes within available reserve	Yes	Incentives - free valuation and £350 towards costs
Market Harborough Building Soc Mortgage by Design	6.99	Monthly. If lump sum - 1st 4 yrs 10% of o/s balance	Yes, fixed for up to 2 years	Min £500	Yes after 1st year	3% of adv cash rebate. Free insurance offers. Fee £295
Mortgage Express Choices	Any product	Yes. Min £25	Yes	Yes within available reserve	Yes	If over 95%, overpayment facility only
Stroud & Swindon Building Soc Flexible Mortgage	6.99	Yes	No	Min £500, max 6 with-drawals in 12 mth period	No	3% of adv rebated over 1st 3 yrs. (Rmtgs 2% over 2 yrs). Free valuation/legal costs
Sun Banking Corp Reflex Mortgage	6.99	Lump sum - min £750. Max 3 p.a.	No	Min £750, 3 free with-drawals pa then £25 each	No	Fee £150
Tipton & Coseley Building Society Lifestyle	6.24	Yes	No	Min £1000. 4 withdrawals pa after 3 mths	Max 6 mths after 1st yr	Advance £50K-£250K
Yorkshire Bank Flexible Payment Mortgage	6.99	Monthly fixed for 1 yr. If lump sum no min	Yes, fixed for 1 year	No	No	Fee £150 (inc valuation)

Source: MoneyFacts. Figures compiled on 29 October 1996

Lenders for your ups and downs

Clifford German explains the attractions of flexible payment mortgages

Fixed rate mortgage offers might start disappearing, to be replaced by a new and more expensive range as lenders run out of cash secured at summertime rates. But flexible mortgages seem certain to become more popular in future.

Borrowing on flexible mortgages is usually at variable rates, which will go up and down with the general level of interest rates in the economy.

The real flexibility however comes from the ability to vary the amounts and/or the timing of repayments independently of the current rates of interest. As the table compiled by data providers MoneyFacts shows, around a dozen lenders offer various kinds of flexible mortgages.

Borrowers whose earnings fluctuate from month to month – a category which includes contract workers as well as the outright self-employed – can pay what they can afford, and employees who get an annual bonus can use it to pay down debts instead of financing a seasonal spending spree.

Women who need a career break to bring up children can also take advantage of a flexible mortgage to reduce payments in line with reduced earnings and catch up again when they return to work. Anyone still worried about the risk of a rerun of the property slump plunging them into negative equity has the automatic option of accelerating monthly payments in good times to build up a cushion of equity in case the bad times return.

But it is important to choose the right lenders for your circumstances. Most – but not quite all – will allow overpayments; most also allow borrowers to reduce monthly payments for a while, as their financial circumstances change, and some allow interest and/or capital repayment holidays, provided the initial loan has been reduced sufficiently to create some leeway.

Some lenders, including Bank of Scotland, and the Market Harborough, Tipton & Coseley and Stroud & Swindon building societies, also allow borrowers to use the mortgage account as a kind of bank and draw cheques on the account to pay for home improvements, or indeed any other purpose. Most specify a minimum withdrawal of £500, but there are no restrictions on the use the money is put to, as long as the account has built up enough credit to cover the additional borrowings.

The increase itself is not eligible for Miras even if it is within the £30,000 limit eligible for tax relief. But the flexible mortgage is still a very cheap source of credit, well below the cost of a conventional personal loan, or even cash borrowed on gold cards or the new premium current account planned by NatWest Bank.

Flexible mortgages can be combined with an endowment policy, a pension or PEP, but repayment mortgages will automatically create the headroom needed to re-borrow money when required. With endowment, PEP or pension policies which only repay the loan as a lump sum at the very end of the term, it is necessary to make overpayments first, to create the necessary headroom.

The main drawback to flexible mortgages at present is the cost of the underlying loan. Clydesdale Bank offers some fixed-rate flexible mortgages, and First National BS and Mortgage Trust combine flexible mortgages with up-front discounts, although they limit additional borrowing to a bare £50. But the vast majority of flexible mortgages charge a standard variable rate, with no scope for discounted rates, and rely on the flexible repayment facility to keep borrowers loyal.

Only Stroud & Swindon and Tipton & Coseley offer incentives, in the form of cash-backs rather than discounts, and these are repayable if borrowers do not stay for a set minimum time after they have taken the incentive.

❑ FirstMortgage, one of the mortgage by phone traders, has opened what it calls the first "mortgage supermarket", offering its own mortgages plus the products of 15 other lenders on its panel. It is becoming increasingly difficult for a single lender to be competitive across the whole range of mortgage options, says chief executive Nick Deutsch.

The range is also targeted at busy borrowers who do not want to shop around and will be attracted by a wide choice from a single source. Regulated insurance products are not supplied so an offer can be made in 15-20 minutes, against the 90-120 minutes a full fact-find may take.

Current offers include fixed rates from 1.95 per cent for a year, 4.35 per cent for two years, 6.45 per cent for three years and 7.24 per cent for five years. Variable rates range from 5.95 per cent with discounts of 3.99 per cent for a year up to 1.52 per cent for five years.

loose change

Newcastle Building Society is launching a fixed rate mortgage at 6.49 per cent between now and 2000. Buildings or contents or accident sickness and unemployment insurance must be taken with the society. Fees are £50 up-front plus £245 on completion and there is a 5 per cent penalty for redemption before January 2003.

Nationwide Building Society is offering a range of new mortgage rates, including a one year discount of 3.9 per cent on the current variable rate of 6.49 per cent for borrowers with a 25 per cent deposit, and a 2.9 per cent discount for deposits of less than 15 per cent. Discounts are also available over two and three years, as well as fixed rates of 5.75 per cent for two years, 6.99 per cent for three years and 8.15 per cent for five.

Another committed mutual, **Coventry Building Society**, is launching a new range of discount, cashback and fixed rate mortgages. They include a 2.04 per cent discount for a year on the standard variable rate, currently 6.99 per cent, plus a 3 per cent cashback, but there are penalties of 12 months' interest during the first three years and six months' for the next two. Discounts of 1.75 per cent until May 2000 and 0.75 per cent for five years are available. Fixed rates include 4.9 per cent until January 1999 with a six month penalty for redemption before 2002.

General Accident has reduced premiums on its level term assurance policies, which pay a fixed sum if policyholders die within a set period, by between 7 per cent and 16 per cent. A policy for a male non-smoker aged 34 paying £100,000 on death within 10 years now costs £12.70 a month at 35, slightly more than the equivalent from Virgin Direct but at older ages General Accident claims to undercut both Virgin and M&S as well as conventional competitors.

Stockbroker **City Deal Services** is offering private investors two free sale deals of any amount, plus all deals over £1,000 free if investors reinvest in a Birmingham Midshires stock market growth account, which guarantees any growth in the FTSE 100 index over five years in full and a minimum guaranteed return of 10 per cent if the index falls or underperforms over the period. The minimum investment is £2,500 and the offer is targeted at utility shareholders worried about windfall taxes.

Market Harborough Building Society is offering 6.5 per cent gross on a new one year fixed rate bond with a minimum investment of £1,000 but a 90 day penalty is charged for withdrawals.

Abbey Life offers a new stand-alone pension product providing £150,000 cover at 60 to a 35-year-old non-smoking male for £28.31 a month before tax relief. Call 01202-401679 or an independent financial adviser.

NatWest Bank is launching a new term assurance plan offering three levels of cover, from £50,000 to £100,000 over 10, 15 or 20 years. Premiums start at £4.75 a month at 18. Call 0800-255200 for details.

Fund manager **NPI** is launching a Latin American unit trust concentrating on major companies in the four main markets. The initial charge is 5.5 per cent, plus 1.5 per cent a year management, but sums as small as £500 are acceptable.

ShareLink has announced an Accumulator Plus PEP, with a guaranteed growth of 20 per cent, plus any rise in the FTSE index. There are no charges, and amounts between £1,000 and £9,000 can be invested. Call 0121-236-4848 for details.

Johnson Fry has launched the third issue of its Income Safeguard Bond, offering a fixed return of 8 per cent a year free of basic rate tax, or a compounded return of 55 per cent after five and a half years, guaranteed even if stock markets fall 20 per cent. Minimum investment is £5,000.

Make sure it doesn't go for a song

John Andrew on how to value an antique and sell it

Clocking up a good price: Once you have a valuation, the best strategy is to offer the piece to a dealer or to sell at auction Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

Stories of lucky purchases at car boot sales make good reading, providing you are not the person who sold the item in the first place. It is often forgotten that for every antique purchased for a song and then sold for a fortune, there is at least one loser. If you are thinking of selling an antique, make sure you do not lose out.

Before selling anything, it is essential to have some idea of its value. Active collectors, of course, do have the advantage. However, those who have not been following the market for some time will be completely out of touch with prices. Books such as *Miller's Antique Price Guide* can be of assistance, but they can sometimes be misleading. Although the picture of the object in the book may appear to be the same as your piece, there could be subtle differences.

However, there is an easy way of finding out what your antiques are worth and it's free. The larger auction houses all give on-the-spot advice and valuations. Simply go to their front counter and you will be given helpful advice from a specialist without any obligation to consign the piece to auction. Valuation days are also held periodically out of town. Details will be announced in your local press.

If you cannot get to a saleroom, send a photograph of the piece, together with a description. Include measurements and a sketch of any marks.

If you know its history, also include details. As well as identifying the object, an opinion will also be given as to the price it is likely to realise at auction.

Auction houses and dealers will also value items for insurance and probate. A fee in the region of 1 per cent, plus any out-of-pocket expenses such as travel costs, is generally charged for this service. Should you not know a reliable local antique dealer, contact the British Association of Antique Dealers (Bada) or the London Association of Provincial Antique Dealers (Lapada) and request a list of their members. Both organisations have very high standards.

Lapada, which has more than 700 members, will advise you of the dealers in your area who specialise in particular subjects. The organisation categorises its members' interests into 250 specialist classifications and matches an inquirer's needs to what its membership can offer.

Having established what a particular piece is worth, you then have to decide the way in which you are going to turn your object into cash. If you know collectors who may be interested, you could always try a private sale. It is also possible to advertise in magazines or newspapers, but such a route does present a potential security risk.

The better course is to offer the piece to a dealer, or to sell at auction. While there are some dealers who will buy anything, if you have something desirable it is best to offer it to a specialist. Selling direct to the trade does mean that you will receive a specific sum instantly.

However, there could always be the nagging feeling that a better sum could have been obtained. Human nature is such that certain individuals are never happy with the price they obtain for anything. For this reason, some dealers will only buy from the public if the sellers name their price.

Should you not need the money immediately, you can always ask a reputable dealer to sell the item for you on commission. The sum you receive will normally be better than for an outright sale, though of course, the length of time it will take to sell the piece will be unknown. Typically dealers charge around 10 to 20 per cent for this service. Naturally you should agree the minimum sum which you are prepared to accept and obtain written evidence of your arrangement.

The final method of selling is at auction. Part of the auctioneer's skill lies in putting an object into a sale which will give you the best possible price. Even at the larger auction houses, which hold regular specialist sales, the period between consigning the item and the actual sale can be eight weeks or more. There will also be a further wait of up to four weeks before you receive the proceeds.

Normally when you put an item in a sale, the auctioneer will agree a reserve with you. This is a sum below which the item will not be sold. Should it not sell, you will not be charged commission. Of course, you can stipulate a higher reserve. However, if you do this and the lot does not find a buyer, you will have to pay a commission based on your reserve price.

Naturally, the price at which the object sells depends on the bidding on the day. It is not unknown for two equally determined potential buyers to battle for possession, seemingly at any price. Equally, a very desirable object can attract little interest. You could be extremely pleased or a little disappointed with the outcome.

Auction houses charge both vendors and buyers. Sellers are typically charged a commission of 15 per cent (plus VAT). Some auction houses have a minimum charge. Additionally, there is an insurance charge, normally 1 per cent of the hammer price. If the item is illustrated in the catalogue, there will normally be a photographic fee.

Whatever course you decide to follow when selling antiques, it is important that you feel comfortable. This is my experience of consigning an object to auction. The gentleman at the first saleroom remarked: "A charming piece. It's likely to realise £400." His colleague was not as enthusiastic so I moved on. At the second, an arrogant individual dismissed it with: "Only worth £150." I disagreed. The specialist at the third described it as "exquisite". We agreed on a reserve of £500 and it sold for £600.

Contact addresses:
BADA, 20 Rutland Gate London SW7. Tel: 0171-589-4128
LAPADA, Suite 214, 535 Kings Road, London SW10. Tel: 0171-823-3511
Bonhams, Montpelier Street, London SW7. Tel: 0181-584-9161
Christie's, 8 King Street, London SW1. Tel: 0171-839-9060
Christie's South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7. Tel: 0171-581-7611
Phillips, 101 New Bond Street, London W1. Tel: 0171-629-6602
Sotheby's, 34-35 New Bond Street, London W1. Tel: 0171-493-8080

Unit trusts need good switching

Tony Lyons seeks the best advice

When looking at unit-linked investments, one of the biggest problems in dealing with a financial adviser is that they never give advice an investor really wants – the best fund to invest in for the coming year.

In these days of ever stricter regulation of financial services, no advisers will stick their neck out with their recommendations. More often than not, having found out whether the investor is a) interested in capital growth or income; and b) whether he or she is cautious or wants to take above average risks, they will play safe and end up recommending a managed fund, or perhaps a large equity fund.

Most companies offering unit-linked investment policies, however, offer a whole stable of funds.

Once an investor has purchased a policy with any management group, they are usually allowed to switch their investments within the group. Typically, the first switch in any year is free and additionals cost between £15 and £25 each. But few seem to take advantage of this facility, preferring to leave their investment where it is.

This inertia explains why the managed and general equity funds are much larger than the specialist funds within any management group.

Yet in any particular year it is normally one of these smaller specialist funds that puts in the best performance in the groups. Over the past few years, we have seen high technology, Far Eastern and US funds dominate the top performance lists at various times. But few investors have switched holdings into these at the appropriate time.

Now a new company is offering advice on which fund within an investment management stable is likely to be the top performer in the near future. Trend Track, based in Huddersfield, uses the moving average unit price to spot when one particular fund in any investment group is about to start outperforming the others. It sells its service to independent financial advisers. The client is charged £100 a year for the advice on when to switch funds.

Trend Track has plotted the performance of funds in the largest groups and shown up a significant outperformance. Managing director Ken Hanning gives as an example a 45-year-old with a £10,000 fund already invested in Scottish Equitable's Managed Fund and who contributes £100 a month.

Over five years, this would have grown by just over 50 per cent. Using Trend Track and making a number of switches, especially into Scottish Equitable's Pacific, US, Fixed Interest and Property funds, would have grown the investment by 136 per cent. This was better even than being in the company's best performing fund for the whole five years.

"Advisers have used past performance, which is ancient history," says Ken Hanning. "We use 30-week moving averages of unit prices updated every week."

هكذا من الاصل

A few home truths

With the housing market on the rise, Michael Goodman combs the property sector for the best bets in shares

Suddenly, housing is back in fashion. Pundits are gazumping each other with forecasts of a recovery in prices and activity. At least 1.3 million homes will change hands this year, and if the number of sufferers from so called "negative equity" continues to plummet even more homeowners will move in 1997.

Estate agents are early beneficiaries of this improvement. Any rise in the number of moves coupled with even modest price rises rapidly feeds into their commission income. In technical jargon, the business is "highly geared".

It's not before time. The business has been decimated since the Eighties boom. The main corporate players who rushed in to gain high street outlets for mortgages and insurance have either retired hurt or suffered heavy losses. The top eight surviving corporates, most of which are owned by banks or insurance companies, reported 1995 losses totalling £77m, against £42m in 1994. Poor sales after a promising spring, plus a fee-cutting war, made 1995 a difficult year. Hambro Countrywide, the only one of the top eight to be publicly quoted in its own right, saw its share price slither to the 30p range last winter. Since the spring it has bounced back spectacularly to a high of 95p after turning in good half-year results.

It made £10.5m against a £5.8m loss in the first half of 1995, and a £3.9m loss for the full year, when the group's estate agency business made a £22m loss, was partly offset by profits from life insurance and financial services.

Much of the estate agency loss was due to a one-off factor, the loss-making former Nationwide estate agents, unloaded by the building society in autumn 1994. Nationwide suffered a bad case of negative equity, as it let them go for a mere pound. The deal was not quite what it seemed however as Nationwide also received a 3.4 per cent stake in Hambro Countrywide and a further £7m for the profitable surveying side of the business.

The combined businesses are now the largest high street estate agency chain in the country. More than 700 outlets trade under separate local names such as Mann and Co, Bairstow Eves, Dixons and Spencers, as that seems to be what homebuyers prefer.

When Hambro Countrywide was first floated in the mid-1980s estate agency was all the rage and it made profits from this business alone. The board was shrewd enough to pay for acquisitions with shares rather than cash and to set up its own life insurance business as the housing bubble burst.

Hambros Bank holds 52 per cent of Hambro Countrywide equity and had earlier backed the legendary Sir Mark Weinberg to build up Abbey Life and Hambro Life in the Seventies. The other big shareholder is insurance group Guardian which holds about 20 per cent.

Life assurance profits helped offset the mounting estate agency losses during the past five years and they will be more in evidence in the future. In September 1995, Hambro Assured Life, as the life office is now called, bought out Premium Life. Reorganisation of the former Premium Life threw up a one-off £2.5m addition to the 1995 profit and loss account while life business profits rose fivefold to £16.5m. In terms of policies in force, the group's life business is probably worth over £100m, roughly a third of the group's capitalisation.

Before the housing market took off this summer, analysts at UBS had already predicted Hambro Countrywide would return to profit this year thanks to increased life assurance profit and an estate agency loss trimmed to £10.5m. Even bigger insurance profits and further £7m cut in the estate agency loss should mean double-figure group profits for 1997.

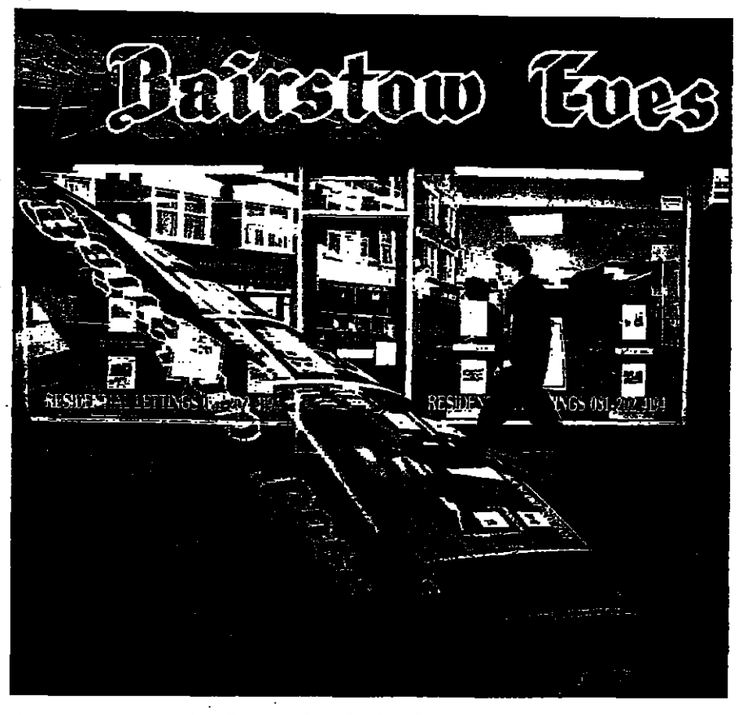
Improved results from Hambro Countrywide will help profits of its parent Hambros Bank recover, predicted UBS. From a low point of £14m this year, Hambros Bank should make £50m pretax in 1997.

Two other stocks in the property sector, Savills and John D Wood, have already benefited from the improvement in the housing market. Unlike Hambro Countrywide both specialise in the middle to upper sector of the market, where prices began to recover two years ago. Both returned to profits 18 months ago and their full-year figures published in July showed the improvement accelerating.

For Savills, the full year was 18 per cent ahead at £4.1m while John D Wood was 45 per cent ahead at £729,000. Shares in both companies have doubled in the last 12 months, John D Wood to 75p and Savills to 87p. John D Wood is currently capitalised at £6m and Savills at about £33m, compared with £335m for Hambro Countrywide. Shares in John D Wood should be more marketable in future as the company is seeking a full listing. Both merit consideration for their above average dividend yield and continued progress in their core markets.

In spite of the strong recovery this year none of the trio's share prices are anywhere near the late-Eighties levels before the bubble burst. In 1988 Hambro Countrywide topped 150p while the other two peaked above 100p. All three have shown surges in the past only to fall away as the housing market failed to meet forecasts.

If this time the improvement is "for real" then these shares are still worth buying.



Bouncing back: Bairstow Eves, part of Hambro Countrywide Photograph: Philip Meech

The winning strategy is: do nothing

A disciplined approach, so the professionals always tell us, is the key to success in investment. Now, thanks to James O'Shaughnessy, an American investment adviser, we have a splendid new example to show how successful a simple method, consistently applied, can be. His research into stock selection methods has unearthed the activities – perhaps non-activities would be a better word – of the Lexington Corporate Leaders Trust.

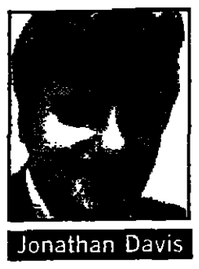
This trust was first set up in 1935. Its objective was to hold 30 shares. The only investment criterion was that they should be leaders in their industries at the time. The number of shares the trust bought was exactly the same for each company, regardless of the price. And just to make the job of running the portfolio even easier, the trustees were forbidden to change the shares to account for the fluctuating fortunes of the companies they originally selected.

You could not, in other words, find an investment method that was any simpler or – seemingly – less rational. Many investors, we know, tend to overtrade, but leaving a portfolio completely immune to anything that happens in the outside world seems to be taking the principle of passive investing too far.

Yet guess what? Over the last 20 years, this do-nothing portfolio, which now holds only 23 shares, has consistently outperformed the main US market index, the S&P 500. And what is more, the trust has beaten all but 15 per cent of conventionally managed funds in the US.

Luck or judgment? Mr O'Shaughnessy has no doubts. His conclusion reinforces the view that most active investment strategies simply do not deliver what they promise. No fewer than 80 per cent of mutual funds (the US equivalent of our unit trusts) fail to beat the market index over any reasonable time frame.

It is no surprise, in the circumstances, that indexing – buying a fund whose objective is simply to match the overall movement of the stock market – is becoming increasingly popular, especially with institutional investors. In the United States, the amount of money managed this way grew from $10bn in 1980 to $250bn a decade later. (You may have seen that BZW, the UK investment bank, which is the market leader in the field, says in future it will do no active fund management at all.)



Jonathan Davis

What makes Mr O'Shaughnessy's conclusion important is the wealth of data that lies behind it. He is the first researcher to have been given access to Standard & Poor's entire database of stock market prices stretching back 43 years. The power of modern computing means he has been able to crunch these numbers to find out, in a systematic way, which kind of shares – and which type of stock selection methods – have done best over that period.

For those who like numbers, the result is a statistical treat. There is not space to do justice to all Mr O'Shaughnessy's findings, but here are just a few, to give a flavour:

- The surest and most consistent way to lose money over time is to buy the most popular shares in the market – ie those with the highest p/e ratios, or lowest dividend yield, and so on. High p/e ratios are particularly dangerous. The stocks with the highest p/e ratios underperform the market nearly 90 per cent of the time.
- The value indicator that works best over time is the price to sales ratio. (This, ironically, is one indicator which is rarely used on this side of the Atlantic by stock market analysts). Shares selected on the basis that they have the lowest price to sales ratio consistently outperform the market.
- Generally speaking, picking shares on a "value" basis is better than hunting for "growth" shares, but the best strategies combine the best of both methods. Relative strength (how shares have performed relative to the market in the most recent past) is an important component of nearly all the most successful strategies over time.
- Of scores of different strategies studied, a mixed strategy, half in large stocks with high dividend yields and the other half in smaller companies with persistent earnings gains, low price to sales ratios and good relative strength provided the best and most consistent returns after adjusting for risk.

But as with the Lexington Corporate Leaders trust, it is the implications that are most important. Not for nothing have fund managers and stockbrokers been awaiting his results with some trepidation. The findings are a pretty devastating indictment of active fund management techniques that underlie the industry's central marketing proposition.

But of course, as with so many things, investors only get what they themselves ultimately want. Mr O'Shaughnessy's conclusion on the fallibility of the individual investor is also severe, but equally incontrovertible.

"Successful investing runs contrary to human nature" he concludes. "We make the simple complex, follow the crowd, fall in love with the story, let the emotions dictate decisions, buy and sell on tips and hunches, and approach each investment decision on a case-by-case basis, with no underlying consistency or strategy."

Best borrowing rates

	Telephone	% Rate and period	Max adv %	Fee	Incentive	Redemption penalty
MORTGAGES						
Fixed rates						
Scarborough BS	0800 590547	0.20 for 1 year	85	0.75%	—	1st 5 yrs:7.04% of sum repaid
Newcastle BS	0191 244 2468	6.49 to 1/1/00	95	£295	—	To 1/1/03: 5% of advance
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	7.24 to 1/1/02	95	£295	—	1st 6 yrs: 5% of sum repaid
Variable rates						
Scarborough BS	0800 590547	0.65% for 1 year	90	—	—	1st 5 yrs:6.33% of sum repaid
Principality BS	01222 344188	3.50% to 1/11/98	75	—	—	To 30/10/01: discount reclmd
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	4.24% to 1/1/00	95		Refund valn fee	1st 7 yrs: 5% of sum repaid
First time buyers fixed rates						
Alliance & Leic BS	via local branch	2.10 to 1/10/97	95	0.5%	—	To 1/10/01: 6 mths interst
Northern Rock BS	0800-591500	4.49 to 1/1/99	95	£295	—	1st 6 yrs: 5% of sum repaid
Cheltenham & Glou	0800 272131	7.25 for 5 years	95	£495	Free valuation	1st 6 yrs: 6 mths int
First time buyers variable rates						
Principality BS	01222 344188	1.00 to 1/11/97	90	—	—	To 31/10/01: discount reclmd
Greenwich BS	0181 8588212	3.49% for 2 years	95	£250	—	1st 5 yrs: discount reclaimed
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	5.24% to 1/1/02	95	—	Refund valn fee	1st 7 yrs: 5% of sum repaid

PERSONAL LOANS

	Telephone	APR %	Max LTV	Fixed monthly payments (£3,000 over 3 years) With insurance	Without insurance
Unsecured					
Northern Rock BS	0345 421421	12.9H		£112.66	£102.59
Direct Line	0141 2489966	13.9E		£112.86	£101.33
Nationwide BS	via local branch	14.9		£113.15	£102.49
Secured (second charge)				**Max LTV Advance**	**Term**
Clydesdale Bank	0800 240024	7.5	Neg	£3K - £15K	6 mths to 25 years
Royal B of Scotland	0131 523 7023	8.7	70%	£2.5K-£100K	3 years to retirement
Barclays Bank	0800 000929	9.3/9.6	80%	£10K-£75K	5 to 25 years

OVERDRAFTS

	Telephone	Account	Authorised % pm	Authorised APR	Unauthorised % pm	Unauthorised APR
Woolwich BS	0800 400900	Current	0.76	9.5	2.18	29.5
Alliance & Leicester	0500 959595	Alliance	0.76	9.5	2.20	29.8
Abbey National	0500 200500	Current	0.94	11.9	2.18	29.5

CREDIT CARDS

	Telephone	Card Type	Min Income	Rate % pm	APR %	Annual Fee	Int. free period
Standard							
Co-operative Bank	0800 109000	Advantage Visa	—	0.64N	7.90N	nil	0 days
Robert Fleming/S&P	0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	—	0.9167	11.50	nil	0 days
RBS Advanta	0800 077770	Visa	—	0.94N	11.90N	nil	56 days
Gold cards							
Co-operative Bank	0345 212212	Visa	£20,000	0.50	10.50	£120	46 days
RBS Advanta	0800 077770	Visa	£20,000	0.94N	11.90N	nil	56 days
Royal B of Scotland	01702 362890	Visa	£20,000	1.05N	14.50N	£35	46 days

STORE CARDS

	Telephone	Payment by direct debit % pm	APR	Payment by other methods % pm	APR
John Lewis	via store	1.39	18.0	1.39	18.0
Marks and Spencer	01244 681681	1.87	24.8	1.97	26.3
Sears	via store	1.94	25.9	2.20	29.8

APR Annualised percentage rate. B+C Buildings and Contents insurance LTV Loan to value ASU Accident, sickness and unemployment
E Available to comprehensive motor insurance policyholders aged over 22 years.
N Introductory rate for a limited period.

All rates subject to change without notice. *Source: MONEYFACTS 01692 500677* *31 October 1996*

Best savings rates

	Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
INSTANT ACCESS						
Portman BS	01202 292444	Instant Access	Instant	£100	4.50	Year
Co-Operative Bank	0345 252000	Pathfinder	Instant	£5,000	4.75	Month
Direct Line	0181 667 1121	Instant Savings	Instant	£10,000	5.50	Year
Direct Line	0181 667 1121	Instant Savings	Instant	£50,000	5.75	Year
INSTANT ACCESS POSTAL ACCOUNTS						
Teachers' BS	01202 887171	Bullion	Postal	£500	4.80	1/2 Year
Alliance & Leic BS	0645 228858	Instant Direct	Postal	£5,000	5.40	Year
Bristol & West BS	0800 901109	Instant Acess Postal	Postal	£10,000	5.85	Year
Bristol & West BS	0800 901109	Instant Acess Postal	Postal	£25,000	6.05	Year
NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS						
Chelsea BS	0800.132351	POST-Tel 20 Day.	20 day P	£5000	6.05	Year
Chelsea BS	0800 132351	POST-Tel 20 Day	20 day P	£25,000	6.30	Year
Cheltenham & Glouc	0800 717505	Direct 30	30 day P	£100	5.50	Year
National Counties BS	01372 747771	Direct 90	90 day	£50,000	6.50	Year
CHEQUE ACCOUNTS						
Kleinwort Benson	01202 502404	HICA	Instant	£2,500	5.00	Month
Halifax BS	01422 335333	Asset Reserve	Instant	£10,000	4.00	Quarter
Chelsea BS	0800 717515	Classic Postal	Instant	£10,000	4.35	Year
Chelsea BS	0800 717515	Classic Postal	Instant	£25,000	4.65	Year
FIXED RATE BONDS						
Birmingham Midshires	0645 720721	Fixed Rate Bond	1 Year	£5,000	6.30F	Year
Yorkshire BS	0800 378836	Fixed RateBond	31/3/98	£5,000	6.60F	Maturity
Leeds & Holbeck BS	0113 225 7777	Fixed Rate Bond	2 Year	£1,000	6.85F	Year
Coventry BS	0345 665522	Fixed Rate Bond	30/11/99	£1,000	7.30F	Year
FIRST TESSAS						
Sun Banking Corp	01438 744505	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£8,575	7.30F	Year
NatWest Bank	0800 200400	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£5,000	7.45F	Year
Birmingham Midshires	0645 720721		5 years	£1,000	7.00	Year
Principality BS	01222 344188		5 years	£500	6.80	Year
FOLLOW-ON TESSAS						
West Bromwich BS	0121 607 2415	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£3,000	7.45F	Year
NatWest Bank	0800 200 400	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£5,000	7.45F	Year
National Counties BS	01372 747771		5 years	£9,000	7.20	Year
Birmingham Midshires	0645 720721	Inflation Beater	5 years	£1,000	7.00	Year
GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (net)						
Premium Life	0800 838020		1 year	£10,000	5.05FN	Year
Premium Life	0800 838020		2 year	£10,000	5.45FN	Year
Pinnacle Insurance	0181 207 9007		3 years	£3,000	5.60FN	Year
Pinnacle Insurance	0181 207 9007		4 years	£3,000	5.85FN	Year
AIG Life (UK)	0181 680 7172		5 years	£50,000	6.15FN	Year
OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS (gross)						
N'castle Bank Gibraltar	00 350 76168	Nova Access	Instant	£25,000	6.30	Year
Northern Rock Guern	01481 714600	Offshore 30	30 day	£25,000	6.35	Year
Derbyshire (IOM) Ltd	01624 663432	90 Day Notice	90 Day	£25,000	6.55	Year
Northern Rock, Guern	01481 714600	Millennium Bond	1/1/00	£10,000	7.50F	Year
NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (net)						
Investment Accounts			1 month	£20	4.75	Year
				£500	5.25	Year
				£25,000	5.50	Year
Income Bonds			3 months	£2,000	6.00	Month
				£25,000	6.25	Month
Capital Bond		Series J	5 years	£100	6.65F	Maturity
First Option Bonds			12 months	£1,000	6.00F	Year
				£20,000	6.25F	Year
Pensioner's G'teed Income Bond		Series 3	5 year	£500	7.00F	Month
NS Certificates (tax-free)		43rd issue	5 year	£100	5.35F	Maturity
		9th Index linked	5 year	£100	2.50+rpi	Maturity
Children's Bond		Issue H	5 year	£25	6.75F	Maturity

P post only *F fixed rate*
N net rate *A All withdrawals subject of 30 day loss of interest*
All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice. *Source: MONEYFACTS 01692 500677.* *31 October 1996*

fear of finance

Ken Clarke's interest rate increase, like the housemaid's baby, is only a small one, but it is definitely an increase, and in the nature of these things it is likely to be only the first of a family of rate rises over the next two years while the economy takes time to respond to the signal and slows down from what the Chancellor now sees as an unsustainable growth.

Recorded cases of a trend being reversed after just one move are rare indeed, and 7 per cent looks likely by the end of next year.

But unlike the housemaid, the Chancellor will expect to enhance his reputation for prudence, probity and putting duty before pleasure and political opportunism.

That will last at least until the Budget, when the cynics now believe he will use his new-found reputation for monetary rectitude to justify some fiscal laxity, in the shape of tax cuts which could not otherwise be delivered without risking a run on sterling. If he holds back on tax cuts now, he really will be a candidate for sainthood.

But credit where it is due. He has done a remarkable job in sustaining the recovery, which looked like faltering in 1994, without having to put rates up until now, but the Prime Minister has never been able to call the election on the back of the recovery and the Chancellor has finally been forced to concede an upturn in rates with the election still seven months away.

In the short run, the first rise in interest rates for two years is unlikely to have much immediate impact on personal borrowers or investors.

The link between base rates and borrowing and lending rates is not as immediate as it used to be. The big mortgage lenders have been quick to assure borrowers that they have no plans to raise their standard variable mortgage rates, and there have been few immediate changes in rates offered to investors.

The most immediate beneficiaries will be investors who have treasury accounts with merchant bankers Close Brothers.

The minimum investment is £50,000 and the interest is automatically linked to rates in the London interbank market.

It pays out the bid rate, which is 0.125 per cent below the offer rate, but it is automatically reset each month and from yesterday the rate has jumped to 6 1/16 per cent.

Other changes are few and far between as our weekly table from MoneyFacts (left) confirms. But we have now entered a period of phoney war on interest rates.

Nothing dramatic is happening and this week's rise in rates alone is unlikely to kill the recovery in the housing market.

Demand for mortgages remains relatively low, if only because there is a shortage of houses for sale, but overall demand for credit is rising and competition for savings will certainly push rates up the next time base rates move.

They might not rise a full 50 basis points (0.5 per cent) next time, but some adjustments are inevitable next time bases rates go up.

Meanwhile with base rates set to be above current levels for two, maybe three more years, existing fixed rate mortgage offers up to the end of the century at least will look increasingly attractive.

These offers may be exhausted and replaced by progressively higher rates.

Clifford German

The Ford transformation – a radical drive forward

By Gavin Green

The Ford Ka (top): a worthy sucessor to the Model-T

Not that many years ago, Fords were mostly under-engineered cars that delivered the absolute bare minimum of driving pleasure, styling sophistication and technical ingenuity. Sure, amid all the sad little Popular Pluses and 1.3Ls there were the sporty XR2s and RS Cosworths, which at least offered Dave and his lager-drinking mates a shove in the back on the way to getting a pint down their throats. But they were invariably such crude cars – all brawn and no brains.

And yet, at the recent British Motor Show, Ford had the most intriguing and meritorious display of new cars of any of the British-based mass makers – and among the best range of cars in Europe. In the space of a few years, the one-time disseminator of Dagenham dustbins has launched a raft of really good cars. The latest is the Ford Ka, which is not only great to drive but looks special too.

Why the change? Not so long ago, Fords appealed to unpretentious folk who wanted simple transport. Cars such as the Cortina offered simple transport, if nothing else. But, while technically and stylistically bolder Minis and Morris 1100s and Citroën GSs and Alfasuds were regularly found littering motorway hard shoulders, the Cortina kept on keeping on. Fords were cheap, there were loads of dealers, and you knew what you were getting. It was a continuation of the old Model T philosophy, that was Ford's hallmark.

Just occasionally Ford tried to get bold. The Sierra, styled by German Uwe Bahnsen, was a forward-thinking car that invented the "jelly mould" organic styling philosophy of the Eighties. But, predictably, conservative Ford customers hated it. They bought Vauxhall Cavaliers instead. Little wonder that Ford retreated back into its shell after the Sierra shock.

The last Escort, launched in 1990, was the turning point. Sure, it was reliable, and sure, there were loads of dealers. The flip side, though, was that it had embarrassingly poor handling/ride/steering and was noisy and unrefined. At a time when European and Japanese makers were offering attractive, mechanically refined little cars which were reliable to boot, an unsophisticated little tin box was never going to be good enough. And the punters said "no". This shocked Ford, who had never credited the car buyer with much discernment.

Things got better after that, starting with the Mondeo – one of the nicer driving cars in the class, if one of the duller looking. But sales were still slipping in Britain. A car company which once had 30 per cent of the market with five models had slipped to 21 per cent with seven. Dull product was the reason. And Ford belatedly realised it. This also coincided with a management shake-up (falling sales usually do).

There were two key appointments. One was the gravelly-voiced, Lebanese-born Australian Jac Nasser, as head of Ford of Europe – a man with both a passion for good cars and a sharp business brain. The other was Welshman Richard Parry-Jones, appointed chief engineer for vehicle development. Parry-Jones is without doubt one of Europe's finest car engineers. (Both have since been promoted. Nasser is now president of Ford, based in Detroit, while Parry-Jones has worldwide responsibility for the engineering of all cars of Mondeo size and below.)

The big gamble came a few years later, in 1994, with the latest Scorpio. This was Ford signalling, in a rather unsubtle way, its intention to be different. The styling execution was lousy – the Scorpio is one of the most hideous cars ever unleashed on unsuspecting motorists (its nickname is the Ford Frankenstein). But at least you have to admire the guts behind it. In a class full of me-too motors, here was a real head-turner, even if it turned some stomachs too.

The latest carp-faced Fiesta is another example of Ford style which owes more to the fish tank than the catwalk. But it is the best driving small car in the world and – in 16-valve form – it has one of the best engines.

The new Ford Ka and revised Mondeo, both stars of the Ford stand at the recent Motor Show, prove that Ford's stylists are now starting to design cars that look different and look good. On the road, both are class leaders.

Ford, former frump of the car world, is now one of the innovators. Next up in two years is a new Escort, traditionally Ford's most basically styled and minimally engineered machine. But the new one will be a radical looker and is bound to drive well, given Ford's recent track record.

Ford's transformation will encourage other makers who have traditionally trod the technically minimalist path to try a bit harder. That's invariably the upshot of the market leader moving on. The result should be cheerier roads, with better looking cars that are fun to drive. Ford also hopes the upshot will be a growing market share, after more than a decade of declining sales.

Road test

Ford Mondeo

Four years ago, Ford was being roasted by the motoring press for complacency. As the products of cynical that-will-do design, its mainstream models were at best paragons of mediocrity. That the Fiesta and Escort were also top sellers in Britain had more to do with Ford's huge dealer network and fleet business than product approbation.

Ford has made mistakes since – the gruesome styling of the spurned Scorpio, for instance, and the wimpish image of the slow-selling Terrano – but the company's standing has risen immeasurably since the launch in March 1993 of the Mondeo, which marked a turning point in design philosophy.

After the Sierra's replacement – the best Ford in years – came a programme of model rejuvenation that saw the Fiesta elevated to class-leading status, and the Escort turned into a worthy rival for the Peugeot 306. New models like the Galaxy (the best of the new-wave MPVs), and the Fiesta-based Ka (the boldest tiddler since the Mini) espoused design and engineering ideals.

Under this welcome new regimen, the acid test for Ford was always going to be a Mk 2 Mondeo. It was one thing to sweeten a lemon like the early Fiesta, something else to make the excellent Mondeo much better. But better it is, and by a significant margin.

Gone, for a start, are the anonymous, globular looks. There's no mistaking the newcomer's bold face or voluptuous rump, though the flanks in between remain largely unchanged. Ford has addressed criticisms of limited space in the back with a little more legroom. Safety, comfort, refinement, economy, security, emissions and running costs also came under the microscope in a comprehensive and effective makeover.

Mondeos were always good to drive. The engineer who supervised their design and development, car enthusiast Richard Parry-Jones, had a hand in the originals' nifty handling, incisive steering and good grip. So did former world champion Jackie Stewart.

The Mk 2 drives even better. You sense through firm suspension that a little ride comfort has been sacrificed for agility, but no one's going to complain too much about that. Excellent front seats and a driving position that can be fine-tuned to suit most shapes offset any mild jitterbugs. A big-buttoned radio served by remote controls is one of several facia improvements. Even the gearchange benefits from a new linkage.

Refinement was always a forte of the quick and luxurious V6s – so vocally sonorous. Ford has made no attempt to muffle them. And it's the more popular four-cylinder models that have gained from Ford's assault on its old enemies of N, V and H – noise, vibration and harshness – making the incoming cars sweeter, smoother and quieter than the ones they displace.

Even in a class of high achievers, the Mondeo is once again the family car to beat. Here's how the 2.0-litre opposition shapes up against it at £15,000-16,000.

Citroën Xantia Good looks and self-levelling suspension main attractions. Rides and handles well. Turbo-diesel combines zap with economy. Dreary interior.

Nissan Primera Great to drive, boring to behold. Masks talents under drab suit. Well made and finished, competitive on most fronts. Recommended

Peugeot 406 Elegant, spacious, refined, smooth riding qualities that make the 406 special. New 2.0 turbo answers criticisms of indifferent performance.

Renault Laguna Styling and comfort – of seats and ride – are strong points of five-door Laguna, undistinguished on performance, economy, refinement.

Rover 420 Looks good, goes very well, pleasant to drive. So what's the catch? Lack of space in a car that's too small to trade punches with the Mondeo.

Vauxhall Vectra 2.0 Disappointing *déjà vu* styling. Strong, powerful engine, long legs, decent economy. Lacklustre handling to be addressed by new suspension tweaks.

Roger Bell

Guy Fawkes strikes again

Tim Stein meets a firestarter extraordinaire

Before and after: pyrotechnician Mik Amabilino at work

PHOTOGRAPH: TONY BUCKINGHAM

Invite Mik Amabilino to your bonfire party (or any party, in fact) and the champagne corks won't be the only things popping. Imagine a 30ft, firework-propelled helicopter landing in your back garden to the rat-tatting sounds of ack-ack devices and Manfred Mann's *Starbird* soundtrack, or Indians and cavalry officers in mock battle, firing arrows of light at one another across a lake. Or how about an exploding cake?

A pyrotechnician *par excellence*, 39-year-old Amabilino is, as far as he knows, the only independent show designer and producer of firework displays in the business, though clearly his slogan – Unique Shows For Unique People – indicates it's considerably more than this. After working as a window dresser in a jewellery shop and as an art and craft technician he became hooked on fireworks when his younger brother wrote a school project about them. "Fireworks are a very memorable form of entertainment," he says. "I try to expand people's expectations of them, to make them see things they haven't seen before."

Of his shows, 99 per cent are choreographed to music, with each one "individually tailored to the client's event". Some may include the integration of lighting effects, lasers, fire drawings (burning ropes of a pictorial nature from £250), or they may take the more gentle form of a scene-setting piece such as a swan lantern (from £500) or a giant effigy of a Hindu god. Some clients have been known to spend as much as £30,000 on a single show. But what a show.

As for the other 1 per cent, Amabilino acts as an agent for companies supplying self-starting display packs, designed for those people "who want to light their own match," as he himself puts it. "Of course," he says, "the kits come with full safety instructions and a professional lighting device – not just a match". Costing upwards of £150 and lasting between 15 and 20 minutes, they might contain an assortment of fireworks (roman candles, Catherine wheels, animated skeletons and so on) and, possibly, a piece of lancework — a metal frame on which you can set up a message in coloured lights.

The most popular choices of wording are, not surprisingly, "Happy birthday" or "Happy Xmas" and they can usually be lit in a matter of minutes. The series of tiny linked flares are fused across the top, so one ignition will light them all. "It's a bit like joining the dots," Amabilino explains.

The mere mention of Christmas triggers a flood of ideas. "I could do you some outdoor lancework – reindeers with sleighs, for instance, or a Father Christmas climbing down a chimney..." A real chimney, I ask? "Yes," he says with a laugh, "but it would depend on the roof, where it was, and the size of the stack and so on. As long as it's safe I'm always open to suggestions."

On the other hand, you could always opt for a frothing silver fountain or an appropriately wintry snow storm – outdoor fire displays of a remarkable kind (from £1,000); a glowing canework lantern in the shape of an angel, a crown or a shepherds crook (2ft lanterns from £55); and then there are those exploding cakes...

For £100 or so, and at approximately six weeks notice, a simple pyrotechnical device placed in the centre of a traditional Christmas cake ("a nice old lady we know makes them") could, with the flick of a switch, send a shower of confetti, miniature flags or streamers around the room leaving the room – and, one trusts, the guests – intact. If you wanted to destroy the cake as well, that can be arranged. "Though I'm assuming," Amabilino says, "that you don't want bits of food splattered about the place."

Self-fire display packs (from £135) include a proper lighting device and full safety instructions, providing a 15 to 20 minute show. If you'd like the pack and someone to operate it for you, it will set you back upwards of £210. Available from 2 November. From 6 November you can commission an operated fire show. You will need to give at least two weeks notice, and can expect to pay anything from £1,000 for a individual display choreographed to music. For more information, call Mik Amabilino Pyro Displays on 0181-445 9001.

Safety suggestions for a painless Bonfire night

Roman candles and rockets, bangers and air bombs: the shops are full of them this week. Modern fireworks are cheaper, bigger and more varied than ever and, if trends continue, we shall spend some £30m on more than 140 million of them this year. The danger is that the number of people who are injured by fireworks will go up, too.

Most firework accidents happen to children, and though we think of sparklers as rather sweet and innocuous, they are in fact a major culprit. The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) advises that sparklers should never be waved about or given to the under-fives, that burnt-out sparklers should be plunged into a bucket of cold water and that you should always wear gloves when lighting them.

A bit stern? Not according to the DTI, who say that three sparklers burning together generate the heat of a blowtorch. "Children will reach out to grab sparklers," says Roger Vincent of RoSPA, "and if they run around with them, they could poke out an eye." In view of the risks, sparklers are now banned from some public events, he adds.

Of the 1,530 people who had hospital treatment after firework accidents last year, most were injured in the street, or at back-garden displays. This year the DTI — as well as RoSPA — is campaigning hard to stop the numbers going higher. They recommend that you always buy fireworks from a shop you know, checking that they have "British Standard BS7114" written on the packet.

Other common-sense safety advice is to follow instructions, to light fireworks at arm's length using a taper and to stand well back. Tempting though it is, never go back to the ones you have lit but which haven't taken off. And don't put fireworks in your pocket in case sparks or cinders get in there, too. Another golden rule is that fireworks should never be thrown.

Given the power of some fireworks, it's as well that we have laws on their safety (the Explosives Act of 1875). Throwing or setting off fireworks — including bangers — in the street or other public places is in fact a criminal offence with a maximum fine of £5,000. Selling them in the street is also an offence, while "tampering" with fireworks can carry a fine and/or a prison sentence.

Shops that sell fireworks have to be registered with their local authority, and by law can only sell to over-16s. But according to RoSPA, children on school trips to France may have "smuggled" in fireworks that are more powerful than those on sale here. So watch out for children going. "Oooooh ... la la."

Brigid McConville

The thing about sausages

Food for thought: the Meat and Livestock Commission claims that 39 per cent of the British eat sausages at least once a week. Last year, we ploughed through 300,000 tonnes: 12lb per capita of the population. Make an adjustment for vegetarians, health faddists, BSE-fearers (reports that even sausages labelled "pork" contained a proportion of beef products have caused queasy moments), the religiously inclined, heart patients and dieters, and the true figure is probably around 18lb. Which means that we're each eating around three sausages a week.

This figure seems rather low. If you have ever watched a barbecue, you will have noticed that even the snootiest supermodel can chow six of the things as they bounce from the coals. Bonfire night alone will probably account for a month's worth of sausage consumption. Imagine a vegan bonfire night: "Fancy some Linda McCartney textured vegetable protein before we set fire to the compost heap?".

The thing about sausages is that they're not so much a culinary choice as a way of life. Indeed, if you read the Euro-scare stories that form the backbone of our tabloids, you could well believe that the one thing the British hold dear, apart from the right to work 80-hour weeks if our employers want, is our sausages. Brussels wants our bangers! Beware the Eurocrat! He wants to limit the ratio of breadcrumbs to meat, cut down on hoof, hair and gristle. They'll be having us eating garlic next. Our national culture is at stake. Vote Goldsmith!

A change, though, is creeping through the culture, and it's come in via the increasingly sophisticated palates of shoppers. Where the sausage used to be a simple comfort food, it is now a statement of pretension. This is no bad thing: I still have nightmares about the sausages we were force-fed at primary school. Anyone who's ever choked on a rubber glove filled with sourdough will have a rough idea. Nowadays, the average supermarket basket is almost as likely to contain a six-pack of pork and leek as anything pink and droopy.

A study of chill counters reveals a disturbing preponderance of development department dreams. Waitrose, among the "traditional" varieties, sells Toulouse (£1.49), Pork and Leek (£1749) and Spicy Mediterranean (paprika, pepper and chilli) (£1.79). Safeway plays it safe with Lincolnshires, Cumberlands and Porkinsons. Marks & Spencer, whose genius in inventing bangers with the fried onion incorporated (£1.99) deserves applause, also wins the award for most revolting food idea for 1996: Daffy Duck Sausage Nuggets with crisp-crumb coating (£1.59).

Asda have gone the biggest bundle on the trend. They now offer 23 types, including Tomato, Mesquite, Spanish Caliente, Aberdeen Angus, Toulouse, and Pork and Leek. This week, Toffee Apple – pork with dried apple and a maple syrup glaze (99p) – joined the range. They look weird in the pack. They cause havoc on the grill pan. And, to someone who coped with primary school sausages by adding honey, they taste heavenly. I'm just waiting for chicken and peanut butter.

Serena Mackesy

bazaar

Preview
Country Living Christmas Fair

Christmas shopping begins in earnest when the lights go on in Oxford Street next week, but if you don't fancy the retail jungle of the West End then the *Country Living* Christmas Fair offers a civilised, one-stop shop.

From next Friday the Business Design Centre in Islington will be given over to the serious business of arts and crafts and it's a great place to get ready-wrapped ideas for recipes, decorations and gifts. Foodies can pick up truffles or cocoa-dusted walnuts, pick up a smartly packaged Melton Mowbray Pork Pie or buy freshly aromatised olives from Provence. For the lazy gourmand there are traditional mixed hampers, or baskets of Devon ice-cream.

Kitsch fetishists will be able to gild the lily with plaster cherubs, candleholders and table decorations. There are even workshops showing you how to decorate picture frames with gold leaf, sequin cards or learn "original ways with tassels, ribbons and bows". Exquisite gifts for children include strawberry-shaped shoes, classic rocking-horses and mohair teddy bears.

If all that sounds too chichi, get back to basics with the traditional present – socks (all right, these are hand-made) or arrange delivery of organic food such as fresh Cornish fish. After this four-day marathon of seasonal generosity, treat yourself to a "witty, wearable" headpiece from Coco Hats or a sumptuous velvet scarf (to wear on your next shopping expedition).

'Country Living' Christmas Fair, The Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street, London N1. 8-11 Nov; 10am-6pm daily. £10; special rate of £8.50 for 'Independent' readers. Late-night shopping on Friday, 6.30pm-9.30pm, £6. Tickets on 0171-288 6888.

good thing

Toffee Apple Kit, £1.95

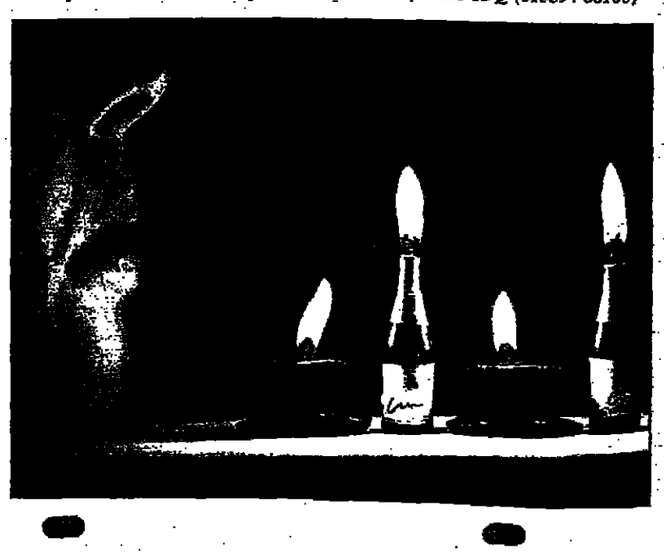
What can you do with sticks, cellophane, ties and "a recipe to produce eight in minutes"? Sounds like an S&M dream come true – and this little DIY kit offers plenty of sticky fun. Now you can arrive at Bonfire night with your own personal stash of home-made toffee apples, created to your own specification (loads of toffee). Come to think of it, as long as you can hold it on the end of a stick, cover it with toffee and wrap it in cellophane you could make toffee anything.

mad thing

Celebration Candles, £3.75

A cake decoration pack for that celebratory feel. These candles take the form of miniature top hats and champagne bottles to put the icing on the icing on the cake. Very cute, but it actually looks like a lot of very small people have got married on your cake, drank themselves silly, slipped through the icing and torched the place.

Both items: Lakeland Plastics Limited, Alexandra Buildings, Windermere, Cumbria, LA23 1BQ (015394 88100)



Treasures from Japan

John Windsor reports on this month's auctions and antique fairs

Spot the Japanese potters about to be appointed Living National Treasures – and earn a tidy sum. Pots and bowls made by favourites for the coveted title are in Bonhams' contemporary ceramics sale, Wednesday and Thursday, 13 and 14 November (6pm).

As soon as a potter is elevated to National Treasure status by the Japanese government, his work shoots up in value. Japanese collectors, unsatisfied by mere aesthetics, have always hankered after official stamps of approval and LNT is the most prestigious of all.

You could have bought a pot by Tatsuzo Shimaoka for as little as £300, before he became a National Treasure this year. At Bonhams in June, a stoneware bottle vase of his fetched a record £1,725.

Will Koike Shoko become the first female LNT? One of her enchanting, shell-like bowls is estimated to fetch £700-£1,000. Does Wakao Toshisada's family of hereditary potters give him a head start towards the title? The estimate of £1.600-£2,000 on his ovoid, blue-grey bowl with three looped feet suggests it may. Why not have a flutter on Kotsuke Kaneshige's stoneware vessel, estimate £600-£900? His father was a Living National Treasure.

Followers of form should note that the Metropolitan Museum of New York has bought work by Miyashita Zenji. His four-sided stoneware vase is estimated to sell for £900-£1,200.

If you want a quick kill rather than a long-term investment, take age into account. Takahashi Rakusai IV may not be a front-runner but he is 71, so the end of the race must be in sight. His flower vase with inscribed wooden box has an estimate of £750-£900.

Insiders will whisper to you that one Japanese potter who never moved from the starting-gate is celebrated as one of the 20th century's greatest. The irascible Kitaoji Rosanjin refused Living National Treasure status in 1955, incensed that one of his pupils, Toyozo Arakawa, had been awarded it before him. Rosanjin's life could be considered unfortunate. His putative father, a Shinto priest, committed suicide upon discovering that Rosanjin's real father was a lowly shrine worker who cremated the dead. Rosanjin's disgraced mother abandoned him and he was brought up by a policeman, who went mad and also committed suicide. His three marriages and two love-affairs each lasted less than a year. He died in 1959.

His pupil Arakawa's deep, round dish is estimated to fetch £1,800-£2,500. Rosanjin would be pleased to find that his own stoneware dish with angry-looking stripes has a higher estimate: £2,800-£3,500. The best-known LNT, Shoji Hamada (1894-1978), who helped Bernard Leach to set up his pottery in St Ives in the early Twenties, is represented by nine pieces ranging in estimate from £200-£300 for a 7in stoneware plate to £3,500-£4,500 for a, nineth-century-style bowl.

Bonhams is the world centre of the contemporary ceramics market. Pots are consigned to its auctions from America, Europe and Australia. The bidding may be tough, but you can bet it will get tougher in years to come.

Most households have a few mysterious-looking old utensils tucked away at the back of the kitchen cutlery drawer: a bone-handled, two-pronged fork, perhaps, or a fish knife with a mother-of-pearl handle.

Old eating utensils (the term distinguishes them from more recent silver flatware) have come into their own as collectables this year with the publication of two guidebooks. At Christie's South Kensington, the biggest collection at auction for over 30 years comes up on Wednesday (1pm). Much of the Vyvyan Myerson collection of 275 lots used to be in the Cultural History Museum in Cape Town.

Part of the fascination of old cutlery lies in knowing that eating was once a messy business. Until the second half of the 17th century, forks were used mainly for skewering meat on the serving dish. The mid-18th century brought a third prong. Forks were still no good for peas – but by then knife tips were spatulate and pea-friendly, instead of pointed. Until the mid-17th century, dinner guests were expected to bring their own eating utensils.

An inscribed, antler-handled steel knife and two-pronged fork of about 1760, reputedly a gift to Bonnie Prince Charlie, are estimated to fetch £300-£500. Six 19th-century bone-handled pieces, including a cased Regency combination knife and fork, carry no estimate: £150 or less might buy them.

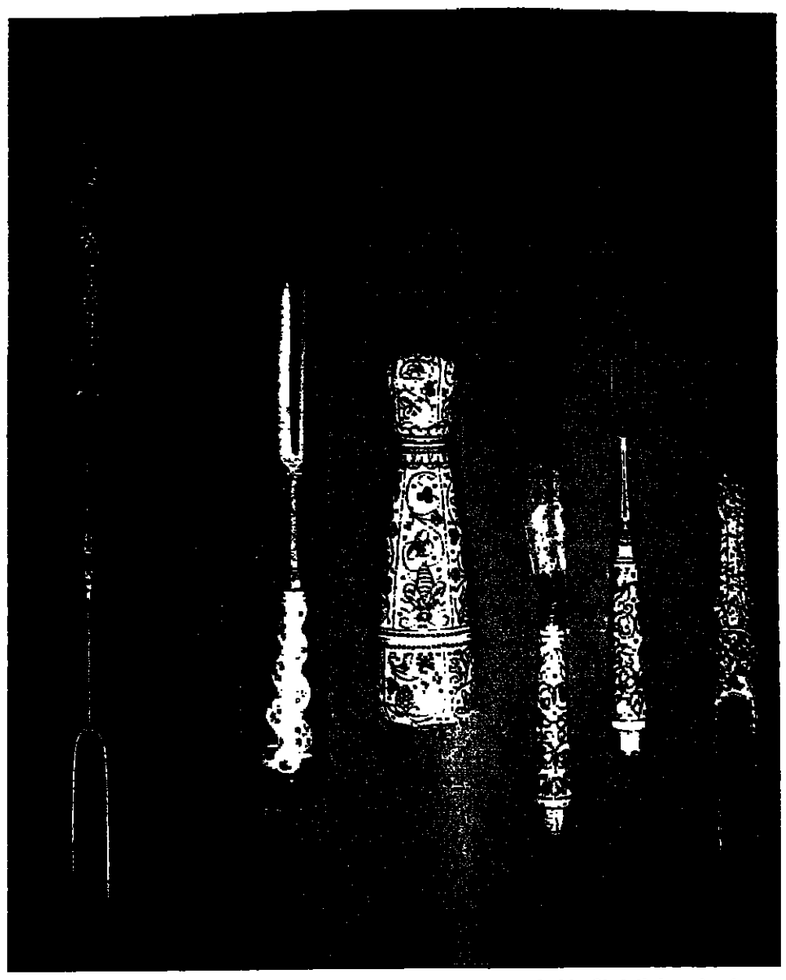
If you use old steel eating utensils, as some neo-Georgians do, you will find that they taste bitter. Britain's only dedicated dealer in old cutlery, Bill Brown of 153 Portobello Road, declares: "I'm a stainless man myself." Pre-17th-century cutlery used to be rare, he says, until metal detector enthusiasts started unearthing it.

At Covent Garden's Monday morning market, where more and more old eating utensils are appearing, antiquities dealer Nigel Mills offers a 5in bronze Roman spoon for £30. I paid £5 to Stephanie Hine, an occasional trader there, for an elegant 9in early Victorian three-pronged pickle fork with barley-twist ivory handle.

Guidebooks: 'The Sheffield Knife Book: A History and Collectors' Guide' by Geoffrey Tweedale (Interleaf Productions, £25); 'Table Knives and Forks' by Simon Moore (Shire Album 320, £2.25). Bill Brown (0181-650 3933). Nigel Mills (0181-504 2569). Stephanie Hine (0181-549 1945).

Fairs: Olympia Fine Art and Antiques. 13-19 November: 200 stands, prices £50-£100,000, with an exhibition of 10th-18th-century Chinese ceramics. National Hall, Olympia, Hammersmith Road, London W14 (0171-244 2219). Entry including catalogue, £10.

London Photograph Fair: Saturday 16 November (11am-5pm), Bonnington Hotel, 92 Southampton Row, London WC1. Entry £1.50 (01865-735119).



Old eating utensils are increasingly collectible, as this week's big Christie's sale shows

Once cathedral shops just sold postcards...

By Tony Kelly

Are you old-fashioned enough to remember when people went to cathedrals to pray – or, at least, to admire the architecture? When commercialism was frowned upon and the only hint of it was a stall at the back selling postcards and religious books?

Not any more. Nowadays the church, like everyone else, speaks the language of the marketplace. "Church shops are attractive retail outlets these days, good places to buy presents and not just religious items," says Carolyne Baines, secretary of the Cathedral and Church Shops Association, whose Cathedral Show in Newquay, Cornwall on 6 November is expected to attract 50 trade stands and 100 shop managers. Along with the publishers and the makers of church candles will be companies selling everything from glassware to confectionery.

Confectionery? "We've exhibited at the Cathedral Show for the past three years and seen a growth in business as a result," says Katherine Ebbs of Personalized Products in Hampshire, who supply own-label chocolates to Norwich, Winchester and St Paul's among others. "All tourist facilities, including cathedrals, are becoming more aware of the value of gift shops. People want to take something away from their visit and cathedrals need money like everyone else."

But what does chocolate have to do with a cathedral? The answer is that anything will do so long as it has the magic words on the wrapper. Last week I popped into my two local cathedrals to see what was on offer. At Peterborough, one shop sells religious books, another souvenirs. In the latter you can buy Peterborough Cathedral wine for £4.75 a bottle; cut-glass engraved decanters, £100; dusters, oven gloves, T-shirts and tea towels, all bearing the cathedral's picture; or teddy bears, "found at Peterborough Cathedral", for £1.85. There are pencils and key-rings and plastic models of monks. Oh, and CDs of church music as well.

Down the road at Ely, the heritage industry is in full swing — lavender and pot-pourri, shortbread, clotted cream fudge, most of it not even pretending to have an Ely or a church connection. You could easily be in Past Times or a National Trust gift shop. There are things you never knew you needed, like a ceramic bunny dispensing cotton wool (cotton wool not included, £2.90).

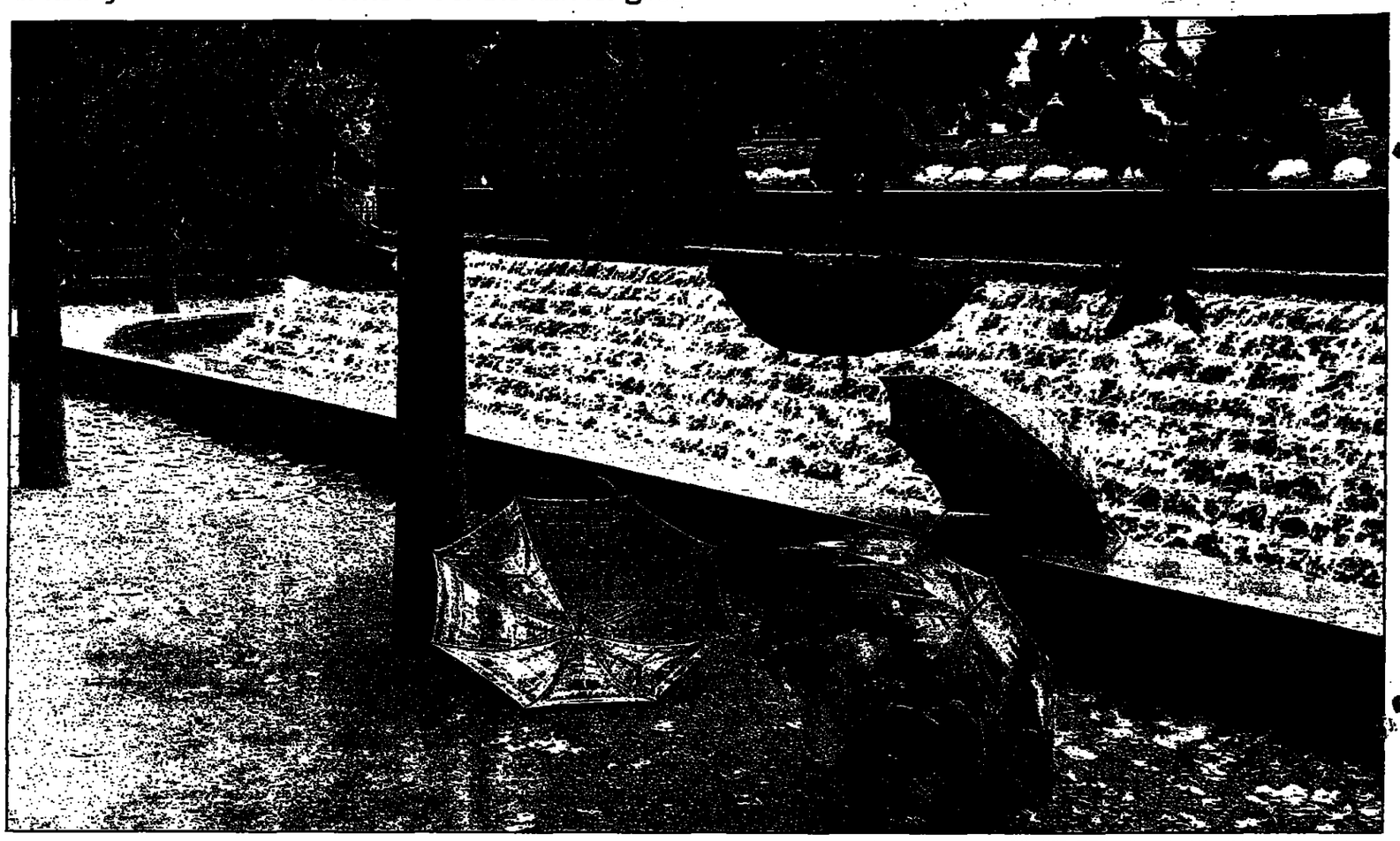
Look carefully, though, and you just might find a treat. I picked up a beautifully hand-turned candleholder, created out of ancient oak salvaged during cathedral restorations, for just £3.95.

Ely, in common with around half of the country's cathedrals, opens its shop on Sundays. The Church of England has no official policy on this, leaving it to the discretion of each individual Dean and Chapter. So Canterbury does, but St Paul's doesn't; Durham doesn't but Southwark does.

Hang on a moment. Isn't the Church supposed to be against Sunday shopping? "Tourists come on Sundays, and want to buy mementoes of their visit," says Canon Dennis Green, Vice Dean at Ely. "We have always opened on Sundays, even before the legislation. You can't impose a Christian ethic on non-Christians who wouldn't understand." Or, as someone else put it to me more bluntly, when Sunday is the most popular day to visit, commercial necessity dictates. In the battle between God and Mammon, it seems, God has his work cut out.

Six of the best umbrellas

The rainy season is upon us again and the ultimate investment has to be a good umbrella. The cheap brolly you were forced to buy from the market has spokes poking through everywhere after its debut in a torrential downpour. We end up making do because it hardly ever rains, does it? Get smart, choose from our selection of luxury brollies — and come out of the rain for good



PHOTOGRAPHER: TONY BUCKINGHAM. STYLIST: HOLLY DAVIES

1 **Rose garden petal shape umbrella, £22.99** Comes in loads of different prints including pansies and autumn leaves. For those who appreciate the greener things in life. The Victoria Gate Shop, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Richmond, Surrey (enquiries, 0181-332 5000; mail order, 0181-332 5170).

2 **Gauguin print umbrella, £25** This is a really nice umbrella to use; it has an automatic up button which you re-press to close. Art lovers will recognise instantly the distinctive use of bright colour from Gauguin's Tahitian-inspired work. From John Lewis, Oxford Street, London W1 (0171-629 7711).

3 **Purple parasol with frill, £135** This is a beautifully hand-crafted umbrella made with royal warranty. The shape is traditional Victorian. Think Mary Poppins and button-up boots. Available from Swaine Adney and Brigg, 10 Old Bond Street, London W1 (0171-409 7277).

4 **Black umbrella with yellow and green architectural print, £55** Brighten up grey days with this printed brolly. Classical in shape and design, a good excuse to look onwards and upwards. Available from The Conran Shop, Michelin House, 81 Fulham Road, London SW3 (0171-589 7401).

5 **Mulberry check umbrella with plaited leather handle, £125** A traditional style umbrella from a classic British company. Costly – but these are investment pieces with a good life expectancy. Available from Mulberry, 41-41 New Bond Street, London W1 (0171-491 3900).

6 **Liberty grey burham print umbrella, £55** A bohemian-looking umbrella to go with the season's hot miss-matched look. Other numerous traditional prints and patterns available from one of England's oldest department stores. Liberty, Regent Street, London W1 (0171-734 1234).

Sunday television and radio

BBC 1

7.30 The Flying Doctors *(R) (S) (1768086).* *
8.15 20 Steps to Better Management *(S) (3060661).*
8.30 Breakfast with Frost. *England cricket captain* Mike Atherton is among the early risers *(92241).*
9.30 The Big Question. Mark Lawson talks to Max Clifford about the meaning of life *(S) (1089965).*
9.45 First Light *(S) (302883).*
10.15 See Hear! *(S) (394864).*
10.45 Deutsch Plus *(S) (3290951).* *
11.00 The Eleventh Hour *(S) (73357).*
12.00 CountryFile (Including *Weather for the Week Ahead*) *(S) (34883).*
12.30 On the Record *(53609).* *
1.30 EastEnders Omnibus *(S) (5609222).* *
2.55 Wildlife on One. David Attenborough meets some Thomson's gazelles *(R) (S) (6475116).* *
3.25 The Bookworm. Griff Rhys Jones travels to Scotland to discover Sherlock Holmes's Scottish roots *(S) (2759628).* *
3.55 The Clothes Show. Tim Vincent consults five men's-fashions editors to come up with five different winter wardrobes. Plus, what Brighton clubbers wear for a night out *(S) (8723222).* *
4.20 People's Century. Chronicles the early days of television. *Last in series (S) (6439425).* *
5.15 News, Weather *(5401951).* *
5.35 Regional News *(936661).*
5.40 Songs of Praise. From Swansea *(S) (213048).* *
6.15 Antiques Roadshow. Valuations from Ludlow in Shropshire *(S) (100135).* *
7.00 Auntie's All-Time Greats. (TV60) Michael Parkinson hosts a "star-studded gala" to celebrate the fact that this weekend, 60 years ago, the BBC kick-started the world's first fully-fledged TV broadcasting corporation *(S) (72048222).* *
9.05 News, Regional News and Weather *(808715).* *
9.25 Rhodes. 8/8. Last in the BBC's epic series finds Rhodes attempting to rebuild his political career against the backdrop of the Boer War *(749135).* *
10.20 Clive Anderson All Talk. Mikhail Gorbachev and Bob Hoskins are the guests *(S) (137208).* *
10.55 Everyman. (TV60). A look back at the history of religious programmes on television, with actor Stephen Tompkinson *(S) (858203).* *
11.45 Accused. New drama series in which each episode follows a single case in a magistrate's court. First up, a woman charged with possession of heroin *(S) (487999).* *
12.15 FILM Lord of the Flies (Harry Hook 1990 UK). Decent but uninspired adaptation of the classic William Golding novel, swapping English public school boys for American military cadets. Balthazar Getty leads the cast *(S) (380162).* *
1.35 Weather *(1559742). To 1.40am.*

BBC 2

7.30 Children's BBC: Joe 90. 7.55 Playdays. 8.15 Bitsa. 8.30 Jackanory Gold. 8.50 X Men. 9.10 Eek the Cat. 9.20 The Itsy Bitsy Spider. 9.45 The Mask. 10.10 Ship to Shore. 10.40 Grange Hill. 11.00 The Demon Headmaster. 11.30 Small World.
11.45 Shooting Stars. From Friday, with guests Gabrielle, Darcus Howe, Rose-Marie and Richard Whiteley *(S) (R) (380661).* *
12.15 The Sunday Show. Donna McPhail hosts the Sunday brunch beano *(S) (2131048).*
1.00 The O Zone *(S) (75715).*
1.30 Around Westminster *(S) (69067).*
2.00 FILM Trapeze (Carol Reed 1956 US). A crippled trapeze artist, still famous for his "triple", is persuaded by a budding aerialist to teach him the stunt *(249390).* *
3.40 FILM Gunfight at the OK Corral (John Sturges 1957 US). Highly-regarded western recounting the legendary friendship between gunfighter Doc Holliday and well-respected lawman Marshall Wyatt Earp, leading up to the infamous showdown at Tombstone *(914339).* *
5.40 The Natural World. The success story that is the *beetle, and how they are apparently helping us by* providing new medicines (Followed by *Heading South, Weather*) *(S) (152338).* *
6.35 Star Trek: Voyager *(S) (704135).* *
7.20 American Visions. *See Preview, p32 (S) (511512).* *
8.20 The Money Programme. Investigating predictions that at midnight on 31 December 1999, computer software around the world will crash, due to the timing in most computers not being able to switch digits to the year 2000 *(925512).*
9.00 Coogan's Run. Steve Coogan plays handyman Ernest Moss, who takes on a gang of shifty cowboy developers from London *(R) (S) (5999).* *
9.30 Where's Elvis This Week? Martin Clunes, David Baddiel, Nora Ephron and Nathan Lane are this week's guests in the show which tries to explain Americans and the English to each other *(S) (40932).*
10.00 FILM Mad Dog and Glory (John McNaughton 1993 US). *See The Big Picture, p32 (S) (28135).* *
11.30 FILM Girls in Prison (John McNaughton 1994 US). *The Young and the Reckless* season continues with an enjoyable rehash of that 1950s staple – girls behind bars (Followed by *Weatherview*) *(S) (281932). To 12.55am.*
2.00 The Learning Zone: FETV Collectables: Blooming Bellamy *(90891).* 4.00 Languages: Sueños – World Spanish *(90075).* 5.00 Business and Work *(47097). To 6.00am.*

ITV/London

6.00 GMTV 6.00 The Sunday Review. 6.30 News, Sport and Weather. 7.00 The Sunday Programme *(25067).*
8.00 Dragon Flyz. Animation *(9663970).*
8.25 Disney Club *(S) (14559357).*
10.15 Link. Disabled magazine *(1360357).* *
10.30 Sunday Live. Lord St John of Fawsley, the high profile of Catholics in the UK today, Roger Whittaker reveals how he came to terms with the deaths of his parents, and how five churches in Norfolk have declared independence from the Church of England. Including Morning Worship from De Montfort Hall, Leicester. *(S) (87680).*
12.30 Crosstalk (Followed by *LWT Weather*) *(57222).*
1.00 News and Weather *(86991086).* *
1.10 Jonathan Dimbleby *(S) (1868222).*
2.00 Cartoon Time *(46059406).*
2.05 War and Remembrance *(R) (458951).*
4.00 FILM Guns of the Magnificent Seven (Paul Wendkos 1969 US). Second sequel to *The Magnificent Seven*, with only George Kennedy left from the original septet *(2067).*
6.00 Des Res. Ulrika Jonsson and more unusual homes, including a flat that looks 4,000 years old, *and a country retreat in central London (19).*
6.30 Local News, Weather *(279048).* *
6.45 News and Weather *(292999).* *
7.00 One in a Million *(S) (3932).* *
7.30 Heartbeat. Aidensfield hosts a quoits match and Nick meets Jo's parents *(S) (98796).* *
8.30 You've Been Framed! *(S) (1715).* *
9.00 London's Burning *(S) (3336).* *
10.00 Sometime, Never. Zzzitcom starring "Philadelphia Cheese girls" Sara Crowe and Ann Bryson as two disappointed thirtysomethings *(S) (20680).* *
10.30 News and Weather *(500864).* *
10.45 The South Bank Show. Melvyn Bragg presents a profile of Welsh baritone Bryn Terfel, who is apparently poised to become the best-known opera singer since Pavarotti *(S) (447715).* *
11.45 Theatreland. The Hampstead production of John Osborne's *The Entertainer* and Peepolykus's *Let the Donkey Go (S) (476067).*
12.15 The Practice. Fly-on-the-wall documentary series about an inner-city doctors' surgery *(S) (71013).*
12.45 Murder, She Wrote. Jessica attends the funeral of an old friend in Wyoming... *(R) (709926).*
1.45 FILM Sparks: The Price of Passion (Richard Colla 1989 US). Serial-killer grief for smalltown mayor Victoria Principal *(858810).* *
3.35 Not Fade Away. Deepak Verma – aka Sanjay in *EastEnders* – introduces his record collection *(R) (S) (2224471).*
4.35 Flux *(R) (S) (8292926).*
5.30 News *(51655). To 6.00am.*

Channel 4

6.20 Blitz! *(5119048).*
7.15 Ric *(59970).*
7.45 Biker Mice from Mars *(4429406).*
8.10 Earthworm Jim *(4474777).*
8.35 Street Sharks *(6265864).*
9.00 Insektors *(S) (6663777).*
9.20 Saved by the Bell *(R) (1896512).* *
9.45 Sister Sister *(S) (395593).*
10.15 Wise Up *(S) (387574).*
10.45 Hollyoaks Omnibus *(S) (5150319).* *
11.40 The Waltons. John is accused of stealing a widow's silver collection. Surely not *(2450338).* *
12.40 Rookies *(S) (7507390).*
1.15 Football Italia. Juventus v Napoli *(51442338).*
3.30 The Gallery *(S) (3097864).*
3.45 FILM The Sword of Monte Cristo (Maurice Geraghty 1951 US). Big George Montgomery saves Napoleon III from a treacherous minister and hunts treasure in this ho-hum costume adventure (Then *News* and *Weather*) *(381135).* *
5.20 FILM River of No Return (Otto Preminger 1954 US). Preminger's only western is not brilliant, but it does contain two built-in bonuses: Marilyn Monroe and Robert Mitchum *(56944951).* *
7.00 Equinox. *Scientists' attempts to discover what* causes so-called earthlights, bright spots in the sky seen in Mexico, Norway and the Australian Outback *(R) (S) (2154).* *
8.00 Nothing But the Truth *(S) (8574).*
9.00 Leaving Home. Arnold Schoenberg, Richard Strauss, Pierre Boulez and Karlheinz Stockhausen illustrate Simon Rattle's argument that the old and the new were battling for supremacy at the close of World War II *(S) (8338).* *
10.00 FILM Good Morning, Vietnam (Barry Levinson 1987 US). Robin Williams stars as a fast-talking US Army DJ in 1965 Saigon. Very loosely based on real-life disc jockey Adrian Cronauer, Williams's performance is the thing here. The background story is bunkum *(40434512).* *
12.20 Gruppen. Performance of Stockhausen's innovative work for three orchestras, with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra ensemble, conducted by Sir Simon Rattle *(S) (4327487).*
12.50 Partners. American sitcom based in a law firm *(S) (3782742).* *
1.20 FILM Lonely Woman Seeks Companion (Vyacheslav Krishtofovich 1987 USSR). Bored thirtysomething Irina Kupchenko places a lonely hearts advert – and is shocked to find the only reply comes from a drunken circus acrobat, Aleksandr Zbruyev *(412487).*
3.00 FILM The Marauders (George Archainbaud 1947 US). Hopalong Cassidy suffers outlaw grief. With William Boyd *(80100). To 4.10am.*

ITV/Regions

ANGLIA
As London except: 2.00pm Word of Calling (91116) 2.30 Close Up Will in the Country (90) 3.00 Films: The Trial of the Incredible Hulk (4364279) 4.45 Love Chemistry (2876662) 5.15 Homemaker (1865741) 5.45 Kick Off (4151370) 11.45 Films: Forbidden Nights (4457961) 1.35am The Loop (3648969) 2.05am Motorsport (2358013) 2.35am Funny Business (7505758) 3.05am Cyber Cafe (9254956681) 3.35am Murder, She Wrote (4131984) 4.25-4.35am Phenomena (7663261).

CHANNEL 3 NORTH EAST/YORKSHIRE
As London except: 12.30pm Channel 3 NE Newsweek (45487151 Yorks. Goes on Sunday (45487151) 12.00 Murder, She Wrote (2349715) 2.55 Film: The Academy Game (1905731) 5.15 Hot Dogs and Cool Cats (5253131) 5.25 Channel 3 NE Dinosaurs (2021191 Yorks To Come (1429951) 11.45 A Woman Named Jackie (6576251) 1.30am Film: Gandhi (4207272) 4.25-5.30am Wildlife (9467549)

CENTRAL
As London except: 12.30pm Life Line (1705701) 2.00 It's Your Shout (91116) 2.30 Film: Once Upon a Time (9862651) 4.15 Dr Quinn (1552022) 5.15 Bullseye (3845741) 5.45 Wonder (2465991) 6.10 Our House (2052031) 11.45 War and Remembrance (8798451) 4.35am Jobline (9450313) 5.20-5.30am Asian Eye (1689126)

HTV
As London except: 12.25pm Wrestling Match Plus (4349390) Wales: Secret Sunday (4349390) 2.00 Wrestling Ballot Box (238641) Wales: Welsh Agenda (91116) 2.30 Classic Premiership Darts (90) 3.00 Commando (6053831) 3.50 Wrestling Touring Cars (5404066) Wales: A World of Wonder (8236211) 4.15 Films: Touring Cars (7889791) 4.20 Wrestling (6424593) 4.45 Wales: seaQuest 2032 (5094067) 5.15 Wrestling seaQuest 2032 (2031326) 5.40 Wales: Stories of Dylan Thomas (9624251) 6.10 Wrestling Song Out (2052031) Wales: Grass Roots (2052031) 11.45 Films: Forbidden Nights (4457961) 1.35am The Loop (3648969) 2.05am Motorsport (2358013) 2.35am Funny Business (7505758) 3.05am Cyber Cafe (9254956681) 3.35am Murder, She Wrote (4131984) 4.25-4.35am Phenomena (7663261).

MERIDIAN
As London except: 12.30pm Days (1587281) 2.00 The Pier (6459995) 2.20 The Listing (4462391) 2.25 Dogs with Dunbar (5767421) 2.55 Champions of the Future (1495121) 3.25 Film: The Dam Busters (2963381) 5.40 Antiques Trail (9624251) 6.10 The Village (2052031) 11.45 Film: Forbidden Nights (4457961) 1.35am The Loop (3648969) 2.05am Motorsport (2358013) 2.35am Funny Business (7505758) 3.05am Cyber Cafe (9254956681) 3.35am Murder, She Wrote (4131984) 4.25-4.35am Phenomena (7663261).

WESTCOUNTRY
As London except: 12.25pm Weekend Match (4349390) 2.00 Westcountry Update (5767116) 2.25 Tales of My Life (5767421) 2.55 Sunday Best (6495121) 3.25 Film: Vera Cruz (5033406) 5.10 Murder, She Wrote (6517785) 6.05 Rosemary (2069325) 11.45 Film: Forbidden Nights (4457961) 1.35am The Loop (3648969) 2.05am Motorsport (2358013) 2.35am Funny Business (7505758) 3.05am Cyber Cafe (9254956681) 3.35am Murder, She Wrote (4131984) 4.25-4.35am Phenomena (7663261).

S4C
As C4 except: 6.20am Blitz (5119048) 12.40pm Round a Round (4525845) 1.10 Torri Tymor (7526425) 2.10 RAP (5769335) 2.35 Talk About Welsh (1827185) 3.00 Equinox: Strange Alien (2048) 4.00 Party of Four (48951) 5.00 News (7695741) 5.05 Mandilesto (7887796) 5.35 Pobol y Cwm (5725657) 7.30 Dechrau Canu, Dechrau Cannu (251) 8.00 Dros Ben Llestri (9168641) 8.35 Ychydig Dros Ddim (6947031) 9.20 News (6953381) 9.30 Stamp in Clechropes (7566781) 10.00 Film: Doc Hollywood (2114061) 11.55 Leaving Home (3719991) 12.55-1.40am Four-Motors (7824520)

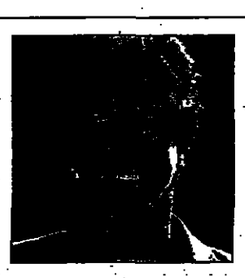
Radio

Radio 1
(97.5-99.8MHz FM)
7.00am Kevin Greening 10.00 Dave Pearce 2.00 Trevor Nelson's Rhythm Nation 4.00 UK Top 40 7.00 Punk Fiction 8.00 John Peel 10.00 Stuart Maconie 12.00 Andy Kershaw 2.00 Claire Sturgess 4.00-6.30am Clive Warren

Radio 2
(88.0-90.2MHz FM)
7.00am Don Maclean 9.05 Steve Wright's Sunday Love Songs 11.00 Parkinson's Sunday Supplement 1.00 Desmond Carrington 3.00 Benny Green 4.00 Singing in Britain with Aled Jones 4.30 Sing Something Simple 5.00 Pam Ayres 7.00 Hugh Scully 8.30 Sunday Half Hour 9.00 Alan Keith 10.00 The David Jacobs Collection 11.00 And Here's One I Prepared Earlier. *See Choice, above.* 12.05 Steve Madden 3.00-6.00am Alex Lester

Radio 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)
7.00am Sacred and Profane.
8.50 Choice of Three.
9.00 *Brian Kay's Sunday Morning.*
12.15 Music Matters.
1.00 Great French Dishes. (7/8).
1.25 The Sunday Concert. Mozart: Overture: The Magic Flute. Musgrave: Songs for a Winter's Evening. Schubert: Symphony No 9 in C.
2.50 Spirit of the Age.
3.50 Brendel's Beethoven. Beethoven: Sonatas: in A flat, Op 26; in E flat, Op 27 No 1; in C sharp minor, Op 27 No 2; in F, Op 54; in C, Op 53.
5.45 The Sunday Feature: *Trapped in the Present.* John Theocharis travels to Cairo to meet its greatest living novelist, Naguib Mahfouz, winner of the 1988 Nobel Prize for Literature.
6.30 Schubert. The song-cycle Winterreise.
7.45 Choir Works.
9.55 Drama Now: *Barking.* In Tony Ramsay's surreal drama, a dog eats the tongue of a heretic and discovers the world of speech.
11.30 Jean Jenkins: A Musical Legacy. (1/2).
12.00 Record Review: Gordon Stewart surveys available recordings of songs by Duparc. Plus John Deathridge and Edward Seckerson on new releases of Beethoven and Bruckner, including Beethoven overtures from Nikolaus Harnoncourt and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe; the Choral Fantasy from the Monteverdi Choir and the Orchestre Revolutionnaire et Romantique conducted by John Eliot Gardiner.
1.15 Through the Night.
5.00-6.00am Sequence.

Choice



Valerie Singleton *(left)* harks back to the days when she was a heartthrob for small boys across the nation in **And Here's One I Prepared Earlier** (11pm R2), *a look at* the golden days of children's television.

Radio 4
(92.4-94.6MHz FM, 198kHz LW)
6.00am News Briefing.
6.10 Something Understood.
6.55 Weather.
7.00 News.
7.10 Sunday Papers.
7.15 On Your Farm.
7.40 Sunday.
8.50 The Week's Good Cause.
8.55 Weather.
9.00 News.
9.10 Sunday Papers.
9.15 Letter from America.
9.30 Morning Service.
10.15 The Archers. Omnibus edition.
11.15 Mediumwave.
11.45 New Latinos. Peru. Clare Hampson meets a British couple who have made their home in Peru. (2/6).
12.15 Desert Island Discs. With Chris Patten.
12.55 Weather.
1.00 The World This Weekend.
1.55 Shipping Forecast.
2.00 Gardeners' Question Time.
2.30 Classic Serial: *Women in Love.* By D H Lawrence. Water Games. Gudrun is excited by Gerald's brutality, while Ursula finds herself being drawn to Rupert. (2/4).
3.30 Pick of the Week.
4.15 Analysis.
5.00 News; Gosling en Espana. La Sagrada Familia. Ray Gosling examines the strength of the family in an increasingly secular Spain.
5.30 Poetry Please!
5.50 Shipping Forecast.
5.55 Weather.
6.00 Six O'Clock News.
6.15 Feedback.
6.30 In Business.
7.00 Children's BBC Radio 4: *Tales from the Bog End Road.* By Jenny McDade.
7.30 Reading Aloud. *The Way We Are.* By Margaret Visser.
8.00 (FM) The Natural History Programme.
8.00 (LW) Deutsch Plus.
8.30 (LW) Suenos - World Spanish 1.
8.30 (FM) A History of Reading in Five Volumes. (2/5).
9.00 (FM) The Board Game.
9.00 (LW) Suenos - World Spanish 2.
9.15 (LW) Francophonie.
9.30 (FM) Costing the Earth.
9.45 (LW) Chansons. (5/6).
9.59 Weather.
10.00 News.
10.15 All in the Mind.
10.45 Breakaway.
11.15 In Committee.
11.45 Seeds of Faith. (1/3).
12.00 News.
12.20 Bells on Sunday.
12.30 The Late Story: *Hurst of Hurstcote.* By E Nesbit.
12.48 Shipping Forecast.
1.00-6.00am As World Service.

Radio 5
(693.909kHz MW)
6.05am Brief Lives 6.30 Brian Hayes 9.05 Sunday with Mair 11.35 Special Assignment 12.05 Big Byte 12.30 Crime Desk 12.55 Sunday Sport 6.05 Sportscall 7.00 News Extra 7.35 You Cannot Be Serious 8.35 Sex Lives 9.00 Dallyn Worldwide 10.05 Acid Test 10.35 Out This Week 11.00 Night Extra 11.35 Sports America 12.05 Night Moves 2.05 Up All Night 5.00-6.00am Morning Reports

Classic FM
(100.0-101.9MHz FM)
6.00am Sarah Lucas. 9.00 Romance. 12.00 Celebrity Choice. 1.00 Alan Mann. 3.00 Masterclass. 4.00 Mel Cooper. 6.00 A Question of Classics. 7.00 Countdown Top 10. 8.00 Opera. 10.30 Howard's Week. 12.00 Andre Leon. 4.00-6.00am Mark Griffiths.

Virgin Radio
(1215, 1197-1260kHz MW 105.8MHz FM)
6.00am Janey Lee Grace 10.00 Graham Dene 2.00 Nicky Horne 6.00 Lynn Parsons 10.00 Gary Davies 2.00-6.00am Randall Lee Rose

World Service
(198kHz LW)
1.00am Newsdesk 1.30 Seeing Stars 1.45 On the Move 2.00 Newsday 2.30 Anything Goes 3.00 News 3.15 Sports Roundup 3.30 A Green History of the Planet 4.00 Newsdesk 4.30 Off the Shelf: *Cause Celeb* 4.45 Country Style 5.00 Newsday 5.30-6.00am Europe Today

Satellite

SKY 1
6.00am Hour of Power *(25574).* 7.00 Undun *(87574).* 9.00 Geraldo *(80999).* 10.00 Young Indiana Jones *(90169).* 11.00 Parker Lewis Can't Lose *(30749).* 11.30 Real TV *(80208).* 12.00 WWF *(94777).* 1.00 Star Trek *(12375).* 2.00 Mysterious Island *(74512).* 3.00 The Boys of Twilight *(80244).* 4.00 Great Escapes *(9703).* 4.30 Real TV *(6777).* 5.00 Kung Fu *(7864).* 6.00 The Simpsons *(4870).* 6.30 The Simpsons *(1222).* 7.00 Beverly Hills 90210 *(24932).* 8.00 The X Files Re-Opened *(33680).* 9.00 Springhill *(43067).* 11.00 Manhunter *(59898).* 12.00 60 Minutes *(39162).* 1.00 Civil Wars *(27384).* 2.00-6.00am Hit Mix Long Play *(55655).*

SKY 2
7.00pm Xena *(1813945).* 8.00 Melrose Place *(4199703).* 9.00 Profit *(7857837).* 10.00 Poltergeist: The Legacy *(1844636).* 11.00 Seinfeld *(1565512).* 11.30 Who Do You Do? *(1297690).* 12.00 Film: Demetrius and the Gladiators (1954) *(8117520).* 2.00-6.00am Hit Mix *(7162471).*

SKY MOVIES
6.00am At Long Last Love (1975) *(61883).* 8.00 Eleven Harrowhouse (1974) *(65864).* 10.00 She Led Two Lives (1995) *(19086).* 12.00 The Lies Boys Tell (1994) *(841512).* 1.50 Renaissance Man (1994) *(82349883).* 4.00 The Man in the Brown Suit (1988) *(43066203).* 5.50 Shadowlands (1993) *(60459845).* 8.00 She Fought Alone (1995) *(39864).* 10.00 China Moon (1994) *(303086).* 11.40 The Saint of Fort Washington (1993) *(233048).* 1.25 Sisters (1988) *(315655).* 3.00 Out of the Body (1988) *(36704).* 4.30-6.00am She Led Two Lives (1995) *(59907).*

MOVIE CHANNEL
6.00am The Brasher Dubloon (1947) *(69425).* 8.00 The Secret of the Incas (1954) *(63406).* 10.00 Margie (1946) *(17628).* 12.00 Tension at Table Rock (1956) *(86357).* 2.00 Carnival in Costa Rica (1947) *(45425).* 4.00 Far from Home (1994) *(2898).* 6.00 Look Who's Talking Now (1993) *(25661).* 8.00 Drop Zone (1994) *(37406).* 10.00 Timecop (1994) *(301628).* 11.40 The Movie Show. *(123999).* 12.10 Joy Luck Club (1993) *(89592487).* 2.30 L'Enfer (1994) *(712029).* 4.15-6.00am The Crude Oasis (1995) *(88839).*

SKY MOVIES GOLD
11.00am Sullivan's Travels (1941) *(67113951).* 12.35 The Man with the Gun (1955) *(51237680).* 2.00 Born Yesterday (1950) *(2974796).* 4.00 The Last American Hero (1973) *(8614628).* 6.00 Starman (1984) *(2954932).* 8.00 Hell Is for Heroes (1962) *(2966777).* 10.00 Road House (1989) *(9455690).* 12.00 At Close Range (1986) *(9475839).* 1.55 All Night Long (1981) *(52996075).* 3.25-5.25am *Only Angels Have Wings* (1939) *(4916742).*

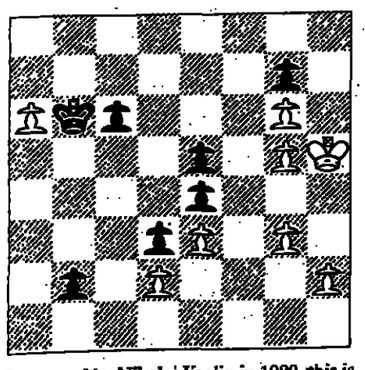
SKY SPORTS 1
7.00am Watersports World *(48883).* 8.00 Surfing *(49512).* 9.00 Boxing *(77208).* 11.00 Goals *(22661).* 12.00 Formula Three *(62203).* 1.00 Drag Racing *(33777).* 1.30 Superbikes *(81845).* 3.00 Live Football. *See the Big Match, p32 (7117241).* 7.00 Basketball *(47970).* 9.00 NFL *(81584 5).* 12.00-2.00am Basketball *(99568).*

SKY SPORTS 2
7.00am Soccer Extra *(5103135).* 11.00 Watersports World *(6696628).* 12.00 Surfing *(1164661).* 1.00 Sailing *(6667116).* 1.30 Golf *(1184425).* 2.00 Golf *(4351574).* 4.00 Golf *(2662628).* 6.00 Watersports *(1160845).* 7.00 Spanish Football *(6688609).* 9.00 Football *(4375154).* 11.00 Olympic Century *(6677593).* 12.00-1.00am Superbikes 1995 *(8984094).*

SKY SPORTS 3
12.00noon Soccer *(73856512).* 3.00 Ice Hockey *(55541845).* 5.00 Sports Unlimited *(36688609).* 6.00 Drag Racing *(10179512).* 6.30 Sport Special *(10160864).* 7.00 Golf *(48460690).* 9.00 Golf *(38083951).* 11.00 Golf *(50629116).* 11.30-12.00midnight Drag Racing *(99190390).*

LIVE TV
6.00am Revelations 6.30 Looking for Love 7.00 Spanish Archer 7.30 Mind and Body 8.00 The Why Files 8.30 Video Box 9.00 Fate and Fortune 9.30 The Fashion Show 10.00 Revelations 10.30 Looking for Love 11.00 Campus Capers 11.30 Spanish Archer 12.00 Revelations 12.30 Why Files 1.00 Looking for Love 1.30 Fate and Fortune 2.00 The Fashion Show 2.30 Mind and Body 3.00 Canary Wharf 4.30 Golf's Campus Capers 5.00 Revelations 5.30 Looking for Love 6.00 Enc's Monster Sport 7.00 Spanish Archer 7.30 Revelations 8.00 Bushido 9.03 Eva's Seventies Pop Show 9.30 Looking for Love 10.03 Enc's Monster Sport Show 11.03 Fate and Fortune 11.30 The Sex Show 12.00-6.00am Night-Time Programmes

Chess William Hartston



Composed by Nikolai Kralin in 1980, this is one of the most surprising of all positions with only kings and pawns on the board. It is White to play and draw.

With the pawn on b2 about to promote, the only hope is to set up a stalemate with g4 and b4, but the obvious 1.g4 b1=Q 2.h4 loses to 2...Qe1 3.a7 Qxh4+ 4.Kxh4 Kxa7 with an easy win for Black. So let's get rid of the a-pawn first: **1.a7! Kxa7 2.g4** and now 2...b1=Q 3.h4 forces a draw; whatever Black plays it is stalemate.

But what if Black plays **2...b1=N!** instead of promoting to a queen. Then 3.h4 Nc3! wins for him. And that's where the clever part comes. White plays **3.h3!!** when Black finds himself in a surprising zugzwang. The main line now continues **3...Nc3 4.h4! Kb7 5.dxc3 d2 6.c4 d1=Q 7.c5 Qd4 8.exd4 e3 9.d5 e2 10.d6!** (10.dxc6+? loses to 10...Kc8! 11.c7 e1=Q) **10...e1=N! 11.d7 Nd3!** (The threat of Nf4 mate prevents White from promoting his own pawn to a queen.) **12.d8=N+!** (This is why the king had to be lured out of a7 at move four) **12...Kc8 13.Ne6 Nf4+ 14.Nxf4 exf4** and Black has finally been unable to avoid giving stalemate. A splendid composition.

You may have missed...

God, ghosts, golf and other stories from the past week.

God is now receiving e-mail
An Israeli Internet company is now operating a service, receiving prayers by e-mail and delivering them to the Wailing Wall. The service is free and available on Virtual Jerusalem's homepage at http://www.virtual.co.il.

All mod cons plus ghost
An American lawyer has warned that owners may have to have their houses inspected for ghosts before selling them. In a recent court case in Florida a house sale was declared void on the grounds that the vendors had not informed the purchasers of a supernatural presence.

Haunted pub
Restoration work resumed on Britain's oldest pub, "Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem" near Nottingham Castle, after a six-month delay caused by a supposedly cursed model galleon. An exorcism has now been performed.

Golfing hazard
A 13-year-old Australian boy was attacked by a kangaroo on a golf course. "It was a very unusual occurrence," said a kangaroo expert, who explained that it was probably a male trying to protect his group of females.

Sober in Shanghai
Shangai policemen have been banned from drinking alcohol on duty and from getting drunk at any time. They must also not accept alcoholic drinks as a gift.

Barefoot cops
Three FBI agents assigned to protect President Clinton in Florida took the chance of a quick swim in the ocean. When they returned to the beach, they found that their Secret Service badges, cash, traveller's cheques, credit cards, jewellery, shoes and socks had been stolen.

Lamb jam
Two thousand sheep blocked Madrid's main roads last Sunday in a campaign to preserve rural pathways.

Bridge Alan Hiron

Game all; dealer East

	North	
	♠K 3	
	♡A K 9 5	
	◇A Q	
	♣K J 10 9 4	
West		**East**
♠Q 10 8 7 4		♠A J 9 2
♡10		♡2
◇J 6 3 2		◇K 10 8 7 4
♣Q 8 3		♣A 6 5
	South	
	♠6 5	
	♡Q J 8 7 6 4 3	
	◇9 5	
	♣7 2	

"if you are going to make more than one misjudgement in a match," observed East, "it is a good idea to make them on the same hand." I suppose that two of his partnership's decisions were defensible, but one was certainly criminal.

East opened 1◇ and South, surprisingly, passed. West bid 1♠ and North doubled. East raised to 3♠. South bid 4♡, and all passed.

Any reflections on the bidding? With the known double fit, West should have pushed on to 4♠. This was always likely to be cheap and, as the cards lie, a possible make if the defence was anything less than accurate. But the play is the thing.

West led his fourth highest spade, the seven, and declarer shrewdly played low from dummy. East won with his jack, cashed the ace and finessed ♠9. When this drew the ace it was all over. South's losing *diamond eventually going away on a* winning club.

Well, what was the hanging offence? By trusting the lead to be fourth highest and applying the Rule of Eleven, East should have been able to place his partner with ♠Q,10,8,7,(x). In other words, had he followed with ♠2, ♠7 would still have won and West could have switched to diamonds while his partner still controlled the clubs. Then at least East-West would have ended with a plus score.

Perplexity

What is the next item in this series: 2.1, 3.5, 3.3, 2.3, 1.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 1.8, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 3.7, ... ?

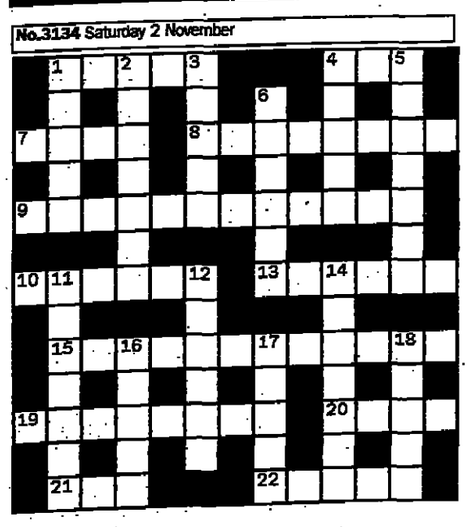
Hint: *If these figure do resist to tell you what they mean Your computer may assist But look not on the screen.*

A *Larousse Desk Reference Encyclopedia* will be awarded to the first correct answer opened on 14 November. Entries to: *Perplexity, The Independent*, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL.

19 October competition answers
Numeracy: 10 Cube Root of a Thousand; 3 Sixty-Degree Angles in an Equilateral Triangle; 32 Degrees Fahrenheit at Which Water Freezes.
Literacy: 6 Characters in Search of an Author; 3 Musketeers of Alexandre Dumas; 2 Gentlemen of Verona.
Perplexity:
12 Words in the Previous Sentence:
7 Letters in Its Last Word;
1 Question Mark at Its End.
Winner: Mrs M Wanders (London).

concise crossword

No.3134 Saturday 2 November



ACROSS
1 Looped pile fabric (5)
4 Greek letter (3)
7 Cordial (4)
8 Recover (8)
9 Myopic (5-7)
10 Skin disease (6)
13 Stick (6)
15 Flowering shrub (12)
19 Still (of water) (8)
20 Birds of prey (4)
21 Cricket single (3)
22 Unclothed (5)

DOWN
1 Rubbish (5)
2 Compunction (7)
3 Stories (5)
4 Indicate (5)
5 Attacker (7)
6 Mark of infamy (6)
11 Museum official (7)
12 Without a sense of right and wrong (6)
14 Fish (7)
16 Church instrument (5)
17 Consumed (5)
18 Lubricated (5)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
ACROSS: 1 Luke, 4 Bizet (Look busy!), 9 Plead, 10 Ocarina, 11 Audience, 12 Skin, 13 Good Samaritan, 17 Shun, 18 Daffodil, 21 *Origami*, 22 *Alien*, 23 *Tenon*, 24 Noes.
DOWN: 2 Upend, 3 Endless, 4 Boon companion, 5 Zeal, 6 Trinket, 7 Sprang, 8 Gain, 14 Oculist, 15 Refrain, 16 Nylons, 17 Stop, 19 Drive, 20 Warn.

The big picture

Mad Dog and Glory
Sun 10pm BBC2

John McNaughton's extraordinary *Henry, Portrait of a Serial Killer* really should have been the last word on serial-killer movies. But that was in 1986, and, as we all know now, it wasn't. McNaughton is a gifted, idiosyncratic director – and his unusual romantic drama from 1992 casts Robert De Niro as a loser who happens to save the life of a gangster (Bill Murray), and is rewarded with the "gift" of club bartender, Uma Thurman, for a week. But then they fall in love.

Television preview

Recommended viewing this weekend
by Gerard Gilbert

TV is Dead, Long Live TV Sat 8.10pm BBC2
Fire – Live! Sat 9pm ITV
Screen Two: Look Me in the Eye Sat 9.30pm BBC2
Video Diaries Sat 10.45pm BBC2
Don't Leave Me This Way Sat 11.25pm C4
American Visions Sun 7.20pm BBC2

The counter-revolution in the BBC's approach to art history is now in full flood. With Sister Wendy streaming up the right in a wimple and crooked smile, and the *Independent's* Andrew Graham-Dixon flowing down the left at a more languid pace – along comes Robert Hughes, he of *Shock of the New* fame.

Hughes apparently pitched the idea for **American Visions** (Sun BBC2) to the BBC directly after *The Shock of the New* 16 years ago, but, as he told *Radio Times* this week, they weren't interested... "until the BBC woke up to the fact that its MTV-ish treatment of the arts wasn't working, so they dusted off the old dinosaur of the didactic mini-series, and here I am again."

As didactic old dinosaurs go, Hughes and his series are good value. Australian without being David Bellamy-ish, Hughes is forceful without getting in the way. His thesis begins with the victorious American revolutionaries eschewing all things British, and embracing the architecture of ancient Greece and Rome. It was meant to be a gesture towards democracy. The irony is that both Athens and Rome were empires, and both were based on slavery.

I took an instant dislike to this week's *Screen Two*, **Look Me in the Eye** (Sat BBC2), and then very slowly began warming to it. Writer-director-editor (now that's what I call an *auteur*) Nick Ward is obviously steeped in 1960s British cinema – and Antonioni's *Blow-Up* in particular, and his film is ravishing to look at, with cold, hard-edged colours, and a pale-skinned, raven-haired heroine (Caroline Catz) of great beauty. What I disliked was the hackneyed tale of romantic obsession; what I eventually warmed to was Ward's own obvious obsession with the film's real subject – the visual image itself.

TV is Dead, Long Live TV (Sat BBC2), could more accurately be titled *TV is Dead, Long Live the Internet*. Comparing the birth pangs of television over 60 years ago with those of the Internet today, this *Horizon Special* suggests that interactive technology is the way forward. Today's kids don't want to passively consume television in the way of their parents. Just wait till they grow up and get demanding jobs.

The sell on this week's **Video Diaries** (Sat BBC2) is "Ghostbuster – the Real Thing", and the half-promise is that veteran psychic investigator, Maurice Grosse, will capture a ghost on his camcorder. I won't spoil the outcome for you, suffice to say that the chipper 76-year-old Grosse, with his slightly bedraggled RAF-style moustache, is a TV natural.

Talking of ghosts, lead singer of 1970s glam rockers The Sweet, Brian Connolly, hardly looks able to finish a sentence, let alone play Butlins, Bognor Regis. **Don't Leave Me This Way** (Sat C4) catches up with Connolly, a man who had 14 heart attacks in 24 hours and lived to sing "Wig-Wag Bam" again.

If you happen to be sitting around tonight yearning for vicarious excitement, then Alastair Stewart is your man. Stewart, whose solemn tones are supposed to lend an air of edification to *Police, Camera, Action!*, performs the same trick for **Fire – Live!** (Sat ITV), with cameras hanging around fire stations all over the country waiting for some poor sap to fall into a bonfire or set the curtains alight with burning chip fat. It used to be called ambulance chasing.

The big match

Newcastle v Middlesbrough
Sun 3pm, Sky Sports 1

What a difference a day makes – in this case for Faustino Asprilla and his great performance against Ferencvaros. If Asprilla and Ginola are at their best again – and Ravanelli *(above)* is in shirt-lifting form, this should be a cracker. The North-East derby crowd will do the rest.

Saturday television and radio

BBC 1

7.05 The Pink Panther Show *(R) (2645550).*
7.25 News, Weather *(2895840).*
7.30 Children's BBC: The Morph Files. 7.40 Speed Racer. 8.05 The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest. *
8.30 The New Adventures of Superman *(3260918).* *
9.15 Live and Kicking. Harry Enfield and TV chef Ainsley Harriott are the guests, and agony uncle Aric Sigman discusses dyslexia *(S) (51107181).*
12.12 Weather *(4430869).*
12.15 Grandstand. Introduced by Dougie Donnelly. 12.20 Football Focus. 1.00 News. 1.10 Racing from Ascot: the 1.20 United House Development Novices' Hurdle Race. 1.30 Formula Ford Festival: 25th anniversary of the prestigious single-seater event. 1.50 Racing from Ascot: the 1.55 Bagshot Handicap Steeple Chase. 2.05 Formula Ford Festival. 2.25 Racing from Ascot: the 2.30 United House Construction Steeple Chase (Handicap). 2.45 Netball: England v Jamaica. Coverage of the opening match of a three-test series from the NEC, Birmingham. 4.15 Football Latest. 4.20 TV 60: A look at 60 years of television sport. 4.40 Final Score *(S) (38260647).*
5.20 News, Weather *(7048208).* *
5.30 Regional News and Weather *(775717).*
5.35 Cartoon *(162024).*
5.45 Children in Need *(S) (168208).* *
5.55 Jim Davidson's Generation Game *(S) (751024).* *
6.55 Noel's House Party *(S) (308376).*
7.50 The National Lottery Live. Petula Clark and Maureen Lipman join Bob Monkhouse for this week's live draw *(S) (692821).* *
8.05 Casualty. An RAF pilot battles with a secret fear, warring grannies contribute to a bonfire accident, and a habitual drunk cries wolf once too often *(S) (687376).* *
8.55 News and Sport, Weather (Followed by National Lottery Update) *(458734).* *
9.15 A Child's Cry for Help (Sandor Stern 1994 US). Who comes up with titles like these? A committee of speak-your-weight machines? Anyhow, it accurately reflects this join-the-dots TV thriller in which hospital doctor Veronica Hamel (forever public prosecutor Joyce Davenport to *Hill Street Blues* fans) comes to suspect that a six-year-old boy in her care is being poisoned by his mother, Pam Dawber (forever Mindy McConnell to *Mork and Mindy* fans) *(S) (953647).* *
10.45 Match of the Day. Manchester United v Chelsea is the main event *(S) (9267463).* *
11.55 The Stand Up Show: *Father Ted*'s Ardal O'Hanlon presents comedy acts from Al Murray, Simon Pegg, Tim Vine and Tommy Tiernan *(S) (408666).*
12.25 Top of the Pops. From Friday *(S) (1402951).* *
1.00 Woodstock 94. First half a two-part film chronicling the 25th-anniversary rock concert held in New York State in August 1994. Santana, Joe Cocker, Bob Dylan, Peter Gabriel and Crosby, Stills and Nash are among the players *(S) (13406).*
2.30 Weather *(4998721). To 2.35am.*

BBC 2

7.10 [illegible] **The Saint in London** (John Paddy Carstairs 1939 UK/US). Suave George Sanders took over as Leslie Charteris's super-hero in this tale pitting Simon Templar against currency fraudsters. Blonde bombshell Sally Gray co-stars *(3205802).*
8.20 Open University: Age and Identity *(8864395).* * 9.10 Seeing Through Maths *(1805260).* * 9.35 The Big Picture *(9770622).*
10.00 Chanakya *(S) (4724901).*
10.35 Network East *(S) (6199192).*
11.20 Bollywood or Bust! *(S) (9642598).*
11.50 Lifetimes in a Day *(S) (6376227).*
12.00 Film '96 with Barry Norman *(S) (67734).* *
12.30 [illegible] **Flying Down to Rio** (Thornton Freeland 1933 US). Screen history in the making as Ginger met Fred for the first time, danced a blistering Carioca and stole the movie from its nominal stars, Dolores Del Rio and Gene Raymond. But what a movie. Shimmering monochrome art deco sets, suitably lunatic choreography (this is the one with the chorus girls dancing on the wings of the aeroplane) and an exhilarating Vincent Youmans score. Drop the shopping and enjoy *(4712753).* *
1.55 [illegible] **A Night to Remember** (Roy Baker 1958 UK). The first half of a Kenneth More double-bill is this solid, Eric Ambler-scripted account of the sinking of the *Titanic (2971650).*
3.55 [illegible] **Genevieve** (Henry Cornelius 1953 UK). Famously a byword for the gentility of British cinema in the 1950s, this gentle social comedy about two couples racing in the London to Brighton classic car rally is also a wonderfully happy exercise in cinematic storytelling *(5794043).* *
5.20 TOTP 2 *(S) (9638024).*
6.05 Rhodes *(S) (7459314).* *
7.00 News and Sport, Weather *(927869).* *
7.15 Assignment. Julian Pettifer reports on the vast worldwide trade in humans, following illegal immigrants as they make their way from Bangladesh to Europe *(S) (240686).* *
8.00 What the Papers Say. Jonathan Freedland of the *Observer* reads the papers *(S) (292005).* *
8.10 TV is Dead, Long Live TV. *See Preview, above (675531).*
9.00 Have I Got News for You. Elvis Costello and Gordon Kennedy from last night *(S) (1208).* *
9.30 Screen Two: Look Me in the Eye. *See Preview, above (S) (3253181).* *
10.45 Video Diaries: Ghostbuster – the Real Thing. *See Preview, above (S) (575598).* *
11.45 Later with Jools Holland – 49 Not Out. Highlights from his shows, including Alanis Morissette, Oasis, Portishead and Crowded House *(S) (564482).*
12.45 [illegible] **Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein** (Charles T Barton 1948 US). Two railway porters unwittingly deliver authentic monsters to a wax museum. Bud and Lou are joined by Lon Chaney Jr, Bela Lugosi (Followed by *Weatherview*) *(8591222). To 2.10am.*

ITV/London

6.00 GMTV 6.00 News. 6.10 Mole in the Hole. 6.30 Professor Bubble. 7.10 Disney's Wake Up in the Wild Room. 8.20 Gargoyles. 8.50 Alien Rangers. *(1209869).*
9.25 Wow. Electronic child-minder with Simeon Courtie and Sophie Aldred *(S) (72636005).*
11.00 The Noise. Pop show features [illegible] and Radio One DJ, Jo Wiley *(S) (8598).*
11.30 The Chart Show [illegible] *(S) (3388402).*
12.30 Love Bites. Which is more important, persona[illegible] looks? And does having a disability affect your chances of having a relationship? Singer Gabrielle is the star guest *(S) (825[illegible]).*
1.00 News and Weather *(3805[illegible]99).* *
1.05 Local News, Weather *(3[illegible]260).*
1.10 Movies, Games and Videos *(7439[illegible]).*
1.15 Cartoon Time *(1477282[illegible]).*
2.00 [illegible] **A French Mistress** (Roy Boulting 1960 UK). The only teacher in France prepared to brave the lethal English cuisine at Melbury Public School turns out to be a mistress called Madeleine. But her effect on the school's rigidly masculine atmosphere is suitably catastrophic. Cecil Parker, Ian Bannen, Agnes Laurent, James Robertson Justice and Irene Handl star *(981901).*
3.50 seaQuest 2032 *(S) (296175[illegible]).*
4.45 ITN News, Sports Results, Weather *(5379647).* *
5.05 London Tonight, Sports Results (Followed by *LWT Weather*) *(749[illegible]).*
5.20 Neighbours *(6[illegible]86753).* *
5.45 Coronation Street *(7[illegible]395).* *
7.15 Blind Date (including Lottery Result) *(S) (296579).* *
8.15 Family Fortunes *(S) (516685).* *
8.45 ITN News, Weather, Lottery Result (Followed by *LWT Weather*) *(4[illegible]666).* *
9.30 Fire – Live! [illegible] *Police, Camera, Action!* [illegible] increasingly [illegible] real-life [illegible] the emergency services, Alastair Stewart presents a 90-minute special in which cameras follow crews on call at fire stations around the country. *See Preview, above (S) (9463).*
10.30 [illegible] **Fatal Attraction** (Adrian Lyne 1987 US). Lyne's feminist slasher [illegible] hearts every possible thing that can go [illegible] sport of contracting a sexually transmitted disease, although that is possibly the [illegible] that can go wrong when a [illegible] with Michael Douglas, Glenn [illegible] rabbit *(S) (2562[illegible]).*
12.45 Funny Business. See Eva [illegible] *(S [illegible]).*
1.15 Tropical Heat *(S) (994[illegible]).*
2.15 The Chart Show *(R) (S) (3[illegible]25).*
3.05 E! News Review *(9173951).*
3.55 Cool Vibes *(S) (86739154).*
4.00 God's Gift *(R) (3693222).*
4.55 Night Shift *(R) (S) (60055845).*
5.05 Coach *(R) (S) (2180154).*
5.30 News *(32338). To 6.00am.*

Channel 4

6.55 The Magic School Bus *(3206289).*
7.30 Really Wild Animals *(7915314).*
7.50 First Edition *(2555227).*
8.05 King Arthur and the Knights of Justice *(9681376).*
8.35 Hang Time. Basketball drama *(6298192).*
9.00 The Horse Line. Horses to back *(87260).*
10.00 [illegible] **Italia.** Italian football *(84840).*
11.00 [illegible] **football** *(S) (71376).*
12.00 [illegible] **on Ones.** Report on the disturbing number of deaths of women who have been abused by their partners *(S) (52802).*
12.[illegible] [illegible] **Captains of the Clouds** (Michael Curtiz 1942 US). James Cagney played out his contract for Warners with a number of patriotic war-effort pieces. This one, directed by Curtiz in the same year he knocked out *Casablanca*, casts Cagney as a Royal Canadian Air Force pilot blasting the Germans out of the sky and suffering discipline problems on the ground *(74437111).* *
2.35 Racing from Newmarket. Coverage of the 2.40 Ben Marshall Stakes, the 2.50 Tote West Yorkshire Hurdle Race, the 3.10 Zetland Stakes, the 3.25 Charlie Hall Chase, the 3.45 Ladbroke Autumn Handicap Stakes, the 4.00 Wensleydale Juvenile Novices Hurdle, and the 4.15 Burrough Green Handicap Stakes *(S) (74221821).*
4.35 Four-Nations: Electric Passions. New series starts by looking at the increasing use of computer-generated animation in movies such as *Toy Story, Jumanji* and *Dragonheart (S) (4517395).*
5.05 Brookside Omnibus *(S) (1467078).* *
6.30 Right to Reply *(S) (21).* *
7.00 News Summary and Weather *(274983).*
7.10 A Week in Politics *(S) (990531).*
8.00 Power Into Art. How they've been turning the Bankside power station into the new Tate Gallery *(S) (7111).* *
9.00 ER. Benton's lack of sleep leads to tragedy; Greene's wife wants a divorce *(R) (S) (770531).* *
9.55 Father Ted *(R) (S) (503444).* *
10.25 NYPD Blue. An HIV man goes on the run after deliberately infecting several women *(R) (S) (483314).* *
11.25 Fame Factory. [illegible] **production** *(404840).*
11.26 Don't Leave Me This Way. *See Preview, above (453956).*
12.[illegible] [illegible] **Hello** [illegible] **Jay** [illegible] **Paxman.** [illegible] **1976** [illegible] **Paddy** [illegible] **Paxman** [illegible] **about** [illegible] **of** [illegible] **television.** Peter Sinclair is the veteran [illegible] **Mark** [illegible] **newscaster whose ratings rocket after he starts losing it on air. With Faye Dunaway, William Holden, Robert Duvall** *(8259695).* [illegible]
2.40 The Audition Canadian short about an actor suffering from delusions of fame *(7535999). To 3.10am.*

ITV/Regions

ANGLIA
As London except: 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos *(82531).* 1.10 Beach Volleyball *(39116550).* 1.40 Touring Cars *(29360111).* 2.10 Stuntmasters *(6282555).* 2.55 Airwolf *(149853).* 12.45am Carnal Knowledge *(997135).* 1.45am Film: Black Sunday *(41088796).* 4.10am Helter Skelter *(5164680).* 5.00-5.30am Sailing *(57593).*

CHANNEL 3 NORTH EAST/YORKSHIRE
As London except: 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos *(82531).* 1.10 Thunder In Paradise *(55588802).* 2.05 Cartoon *(56838314).* 2.15 Film: Johnny Tiernan *(813550).* 3.50 Airwolf *(2961753).* 5.10 *Channel 3 North East: Full Time (6883753). Yorks:* Scoreline *(6883753).* 12.45am The Making of Escape from LA *(78593).* 1.15am Funny Business *(75406).* 1.45am War and Remembrance *(546593).* 3.40am Late & Loud *(2134593).* 4.35-5.30am Murder, She Wrote *(8398154).*

CENTRAL
As London except: 12.30pm Premiere *(82531).* 1.10 Cartoon Time *(86904550).* 1.25 Dinosaurs *(39112734).* 1.55 Eastern Mix *(29366395).* 2.25 Movies, Games and Videos *(57607531).* 2.55 Airwolf *(149853).* 3.50 RoboCop *(2961753).* 5.10 Central Match *(6883753).* 4.00am Jobfinder *(2108203).* 5.20-5.30am Asian Eye *(1785390).*

HTV
As London except: 12.30pm *West:* Hot Dogs and Cool Cats *(1510376). Wales:* California Offbeat *(17575734).* 12.45 *Wales:* Rugby 2000 *(17570289).* 12.50 *West:* Cartoon Time *(17003918).* 1.10 *West:* Go Wild In the Country – The Making of Wind In the Willows *(39116550). Wales:* The Electric Chair *(39116550).* 1.40 Movies, Games and Videos *(29360111).* 2.10 Film: True as a Turtle *(388289).* 3.55 Knight Rider *(9053869).* 12.45am Carnal Knowledge *(997135).* 1.45am Film: Black Sunday *(41088796).* 4.10am Helter Skelter *(5164680).* 5.00-5.30am Sailing *(57593).*

MERIDIAN
As London except: 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos *(82531).* 1.10 A-Ha *(39116550).* 1.40 Touring Cars *(29360111).* 2.10 World of Sailing *(70167840).* 2.40 Warner Cartoon *(2388043).* 2.50 Airwolf *(6340869).* 12.45am Carnal Knowledge *(997135).* 1.45am Film: Black Sunday *(41088796).* 4.10am Helter Skelter *(5164680).* 5.00-5.30am Freescreen *(57593).*

WESTCOUNTRY
As London except: 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos *(82531).* 1.10 Champions of the Future *(39116550).* 1.40 Wanted Dead or Alive *(29360111).* 2.10 Film: Gregory's Girl *(397937).* 12.45am Carnal Knowledge *(997135).* 1.45am Film: Black Sunday *(41088796).* 4.10am Helter Skelter *(5164680).* 5.00-5.30am Sailing *(57593).*

S4C
As C4 except: 7.30am Really Wild Animals: Wonders Down Under *(7915314).* 10.00 Rookies *(69043).* 10.30 New Gamesmaster *(61550).* 12.30 Moviewatch *(80173).* 1.00 Avengers *(18956).* 2.00 Travelog Treks *(7013444).* 2.35 Racing *(7422821).* 6.30 Real Holiday Show *(21).* 7.00 News *(912937).* 7.15 Noson Lawen *(3954531).* 8.20 Hel Straeon *(411043).* 8.50 Glas Y Dorlan *(937043).* 9.25 Film: One Woman's Courage *(54428550).* 11.10-11.25pm Flush *(982043).*

Radio

Radio 1
(97.6-99.28MHz FM)
7.00am Kevin Greening **10.00** Dave Pearce **1.00** Jo Whiley **4.00** John Peel **7.00** Lovegroove Dance Party with Danny Rampling **9.00** Radio 1 Rap Show **12.00** The Radio 1 Reggae Dancehall Nite **2.00** Essential Mix: Live In Birmmgham **4.00-7.00am** Claire Sturgess

Radio 2
(88-90.20MHz FM)
6.00am Mo Dutta **8.05** Brian Matthew **10.00** Steve Wright's Saturday Show **1.00** Carrott's Comedy Choice **1.30** The News Huddlines **2.00** Judi Spiers **4.00** Nick Barraclough **5.00** Apple Scruffs **6.00** The Strawbs In Concert **7.00** Vaudeville Red-Hot and Blue **7.30** Petula Clark **9.30** David Jacobs **10.00** Mining Men, Their Art and Music **12.05** Charles Nove **4.00-6.00am** Mo Dutta

Radio 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)
7.00am Record Review.
9.00 Building a Library. Gordon Stewart surveys available recordings of songs by Duparc. Plus John Deathridge and Edward Seckerson on new releases of Beethoven and Bruckner, including Beethoven overtures from Nikolaus Harnoncourt and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe; the Choral Fantasy from the Monteverdi Choir and the Orchestre Revolutionnaire et Romantique conducted by John Eliot Gardiner.
10.15 Record Release. Beethoven: Overture: Leonore No 1. Beethoven: Symphony No 4 in B flat.
12.00 Private Passions.
1.00 News; Simon Rattle – Home and Away. Opera. Michael Birkett talks to Simon Rattle about his forays into the opera house and introduces recordings of the most dramatic performances of the last 20 years, including excerpts from Gershwin's Porgy and Bess, Janacek's The Cunning Little Vixen, Weill's Mahagonny Songspiel and the new recording of Mozart's Cosi Fan Tutte with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. (7/8).
3.00 The Department Score.
3.30 Liszt at the Opera.
3.50 The Covent Garden Ring. Gotterdammerung. The concluding work in Wagner's operatic tetralogy live from the Royal Opera House. Brunnhilde and Siegfried struggle to keep alive their dream of a world ruled by love as they battle the evil Hagen, half-human son of the Nibelung dwarf Alberich. Cast includes Anne Evans, soprano, Wolfgang Fassler, tenor, Kurt Rydl, bass, Ekkehard Wlaschiha, baritone. Royal Opera Chorus, Orchestra of the Royal Opera House Bernard Haitink.
10.05 Building for the Arts.
10.35 Erskine and Abercrombie. Chris Parker introduces a concert featuring drummer Peter Erskine and guitarist John Abercrombie, recorded on their recent Contemporary Music Network tour.
1.00 Through the Night.
6.00-7.00am Sequence.

Radio 4
(93.4-94.6MHz FM, 198kHz LW)
6.00am News Briefing.
6.10 Farming Today.
6.50 Prayer for the Day.
6.55 Weather.
7.00 Today.
8.58 Weather.
9.00 News.
9.05 Sport on 4.
9.30 Breakaway.
10.00 News; Loose Ends.
11.00 The Week in Westminster.
11.30 EuroFile. William Horsley reports on the anxieties raised in Germany by the activities of The Church of Scientology. Is it a government witch-hunt? Presented by David Walter. *See Choice, above.*
12.00 Money Box.
12.25 News Quiz.
12.55 Weather.
1.00 News.
1.10 Any Questions?
1.55 Shipping Forecast.
2.00 News; Any Answers?
2.30 Saturday Playhouse: *Northern Lights.* In Clare Bayley's coincidental drama, Susie pursues a Scottish truck driver up the motorway while Laura falls in love with a Kurdish refugee seeking political asylum. How are the two connected? With Elaine Pyke, Elaine Claxton and Mozaffar Shafeie.
4.00 News; A History of Reading in Five Volumes. (2/5).
4.30 Science Now.
5.00 File on 4.
5.40 The Wardrobe. (5/6).
5.50 Shipping Forecast.
5.55 Weather.
6.00 Six O'Clock News.
6.25 Week Ending.
6.50 Ad Lib.
7.20 Kaleidoscope Feature. How does the architecture of a theatre affect the staging of plays? In what way does the design of the building influence the relationship between actor and audience? Paul Allen examines the issues with reference to a variety of theatres, from the restored Globe in Bankside, London, to theatre which happens in a disused hotel.
7.50 On These Days.
8.50 Saturday Night Theatre: *Who Sings the Hero?* The Sinking of the City of Cairo. A dramatic tale of courage and heroism by Vincent McInerney. When the *City of Cairo* was torpedoed in 1942, the survivors found themselves 500 miles from the nearest land. (1/3).
9.35 Classics with Kay.
9.50 Ten to Ten.
9.59 Weather.
10.00 News.
10.15 Alaska. Susan Jane Harrison's imaginative drama explores experiment and romance in snowy Alaska.
11.15 Auntie's Secret Box
11.30 Stanza on Stage.
12.00 News.
12.30 The Late Story: *The Smell.* By Patrick McGrath.
12.48 Shipping Forecast.
1.00-6.00am As World Service.

Radio 5
(693, 909kHz MW)
6.00am Dirty Tackle **6.30** Brian Hayes at Breakfast **9.05** Weekend with Kershaw and Whittaker **11.05** Top Gear **11.35** Sick as a Parrot **12.05** Baker and Kelly Upfront **1.05** Sport on Five **6.06** Six-O-Six **8.05** The Treatment **9.05** Dallyn UK **10.05** Brief Lives **10.35** Word Up! **11.00** Night Extra **12.05** Night Talk with Pattie Coldwell **2.00** Up All Night **5.00-6.00am** Morning Reports

Classic FM
(100.0-101.9MHz FM)
6.00am Sarah Lucas. **9.00** Classic Countdown. **12.00** Gardening Forum. **1.00** Alan Mann. **4.00** Nick Bailey. **7.00** Russian Revelation. **8.00** Evening Concert. R Strauss: Don Juan. Elgar: Cello Concerto in E minor. Schubert: Symphony No 9 in C. **10.00** The Classic Quiz. **12.00** Andre Leon. **4.00** The Travel Guide. **5.00-6.00am** Michael Fanstone.

Virgin Radio
(1215, 1197-1260kHz MW 105.8MHz FM)
6.00am Janey Lee Grace **8.00** Russ and Jono **10.00** Jeremy Clark **2.00** Mark Forrest **6.00** Lynn Parsons **10.00** Robin Banks **2.00-6.00am** Howard Pearce

World Service
(198kHz LW)
1.00am Newsdesk **1.30** Inspiration **2.00** Newsday **2.30** People and Politics **3.00** News **3.15** Sports Roundup **3.30** Music Review **4.00** Newsdesk **4.30** Seeing Stars **4.45** On the Move **5.00** Newsday **5.30-6.00am** In Praise of God

Choice

EuroFile (11.30am R4) this week examines the German government's allergy to Scientology. Public employees in Bavaria now have to pledge they aren't members of L Ron Hubbard's barmy army. So that's Tom Cruise's *(left)* ambitions for the Bavarian civil service out of the window.

Satellite

SKY 1
7.00am Undun *(34869).* **9.00** Sally Jessy Raphael *(30376).* **10.00** Designing Women *(98579).* **10.30** Murphy Brown *(21956).* **11.00** Parker Lewis Can't Lose *(63956).* **11.30** Real TV *(64685).* **12.00** WWF *(52314).* **1.00** Hit Mix *(38734).* **2.00** Hercules *(99208).* **3.00** Lazarus Man *(35173).* **4.00** WWF *(54208).* **5.00** Pacific Blue *(2598).* **6.00** Dumbest Criminals *(2821).* **6.30** Just Kidding *(3173).* **7.00** Hercules *(99869).* **8.00** Unsolved Mysteries *(75289).* **9.00** Cops *(88753).* **10.00** Stand and Deliver *(13937).* **10.30** Revelations *(22685).* **11.00** Movie Show *(55937).* **11.30** Young Indiana Jones *(51043).* **12.30** Dream On *(54086).* **1.00** Comedy *(74883).* **1.30** The Edge *(81661).* **2.00-7.00am** Hit Mix *(53864).*

SKY MOVIES
6.00am Crooks Anonymous (1962) *(96192).* **8.00** Barnabo of the Mountains (1991) *(75119005).* **10.05** The Neptune Factor (1973) *(94998043).* **12.00** Other Women's Children (1993) *(96111).* **2.00** Revenge of the Nerds IV (1994) *(72192).* **4.00** The Power Within (1994) *(7802).* **6.00** The Air Up There (1994) *(92956).* **8.00** Blue Sky (1994) *(64173).* **10.00** Street Fighter (1994) *(918821).* **11.45** Sexual Malice (1993) *(586666).* **1.25** Street Fighter (1994) *(724319).* **3.05-6.00am** The Ballad of Little Joe (1993) *(75937375).*

MOVIE CHANNEL
6.00am It's in the Air (1938) *(94734).* **8.00** Belle Starr (1941) *(71802).* **10.00** Little Miss Millions (1992) *(42937).* **12.00** The Pride of Jesse Hallam (1981) *(94753).* **2.00** Stargate (1994) *(70734).* **4.00** Eversmile, New Jersey (1989) *(99494050).* **5.45** Licence to Kill (1989) *(60405024).* **8.00** Stargate (1994) *(95043).* **10.00** Maverick (1993) *(12407821).* **12.10** What's Eating Gilbert Grape? (1994) *(44406796).* **2.15** Night Eyes II (1991) *(779715).* **3.55-6.00am** The Disappearance of Vonnie (1994) *(75700845).*

SKY MOVIES GOLD
4.00pm From This Day Forward (1946) *(8647956).* **6.00** Hud (1963) *(2987260).* **8.00** Bloodhounds of Broadway (1989) *(2999005).* **10.00** Overboard (1987) *(1768591).* **11.55** Spacehunter: The Adventures of the Forbidden Zone (1983) *(4706314).* **1.30** Thunder Bay (1953) *(6524203).* **3.15-4.35am** Rock Around the Clock (1956) *(21125390).*

UK GOLD
7.00am Give Us A Clue *(8658537).* **7.30** Going for Gold *(4099647).* **7.55** Sullivans *(63903666).* **10.00** Neighbours *(1854163).* **12.00** EastEnders *(31786482).* **2.55** Minder *(68155647).* **4.00** Robin's Nest *(8718840).* **4.30** Sorry! *(5244666).* **5.15** The A Team *(7203024).* **6.15** Bullseye *(1828956).* **6.45** Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em *(5837869).* **7.25** Whatever Happened to the Likely Lads? *(5515685).* **8.05** Shoestring *(70461260).* **9.10** Film: The Big Easy (1987) *(30064111).* **11.05** Kojak *(9485647).* **12.10** Miami Vice *(6534999).* **1.05** Album Show *(2357319).* **2.05-7.00am** Shopping at Night *(62249131).*

SKY SPORTS 1
7.00am World Sport *(43531).* **7.30** Cavalcade *(33918).* **8.30** Racing *(63821).* **9.00** Ice Hockey *(76192).* **10.00** Rugby *(51550).* **11.00** Hold the Back Page *(71314).* **12.00** Sports Saturday *(8721550).* **5.30** Ice Hockey *(40024).* **6.30** Sailing *(6685).* **7.00** Surfing *(28395).* **8.00** Live Boxing *(798668).* **10.30** Bushido *(69685).* **11.30** Surfing *(64531).* **12.30-2.30am** Boxing *(25628).*

SKY SPORTS 2
7.00am Soccer AM *(5136463).* **11.00** Cavalcade *(6629956).* **12.00** Inside the PGA *(3787647).* **12.30** Inside the PGA *(1118482).* **1.00** Golf *(1113937).* **2.00** Ice Hockey *(7715192).* **3.00** Skiff Sailing *(2684840).* **3.30** Finish Line *(3698376).* **4.00** Golf *(2818260).* **5.00** Asian Golf *(2675192).* **6.00** Spanish Football *(9952227).* **8.30** Futbol Mundial *(2671376).* **9.00** Cavalcade *(4385531).* **10.00** Formula Three Racing *(4395918).* **11.00** Sport Memories *(6600821).* **12.00-1.00am** FA Cup Classics *(8080222).*

SKY SPORTS 3
12.00noon Sailing *(56966550).* **12.30** Finish Line *(25568821).* **1.00** Motor Sport *(87601956).* **5.00** Velo-Cycling *(36592802).* **5.30** Sailing *(10112227).* **6.00** Finish Line *(10102840).* **6.30** Golf *(10193192).* **7.00** Live Golf *(20893338).* **9.00** Live Golf *(38023579).* **11.00** Skiff Sailing *(50652444).* **11.30-12.00midnight** Finish Line *(99130918).*

LIVE TV
6.00am Revelations **6.30** Looking for Love **7.00** Spanish Archer **7.30** Mind and Body **8.00** Why Files **8.30** Video Box **9.00** Fate and Fortune **9.30** Fashion **10.00** Revelations **10.30** Looking for Love **11.00** Mind and Body **11.30** Spanish Archer **12.00** Campus Capers **12.30** Why Files **1.00** Looking for Love **1.30** Fate and Fortune **2.00** Fashion **2.30** Mind and Body **3.00** Chequered Flag **3.30** Pin Money **4.00** Monster Sport **5.30** Seventies Pop **6.00** Fashion **6.30** Monster Sport **7.00** Spanish Archer **7.30** Ravelations **8.00** Bushido **9.03** Why Files **9.30** Looking for Love **10.03** Monster Sport **10.30** Stand Up **11.03** Fate and Fortune **11.30** Sex Show **12.00-6.00am** Night-Time Programmes

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